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Works of the Right Reverend
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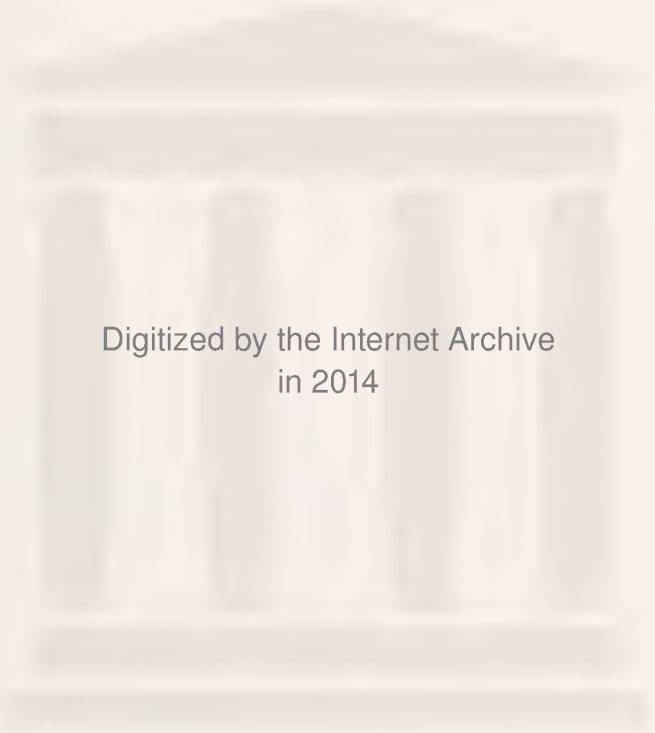

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THE

WORKS

OF THE

RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

JOSEPH HALL, D.D.

SUCCESSIVELY BISHOP OF EXETER AND NORWICH:

NOW FIRST COLLECTED.

WITH SOME

ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND SUFFERINGS,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

ARRANGED AND REVISED,

WITH A GLOSSARY, INDEX, AND OCCASIONAL NOTES,

BY JOSIAH PRATT, B.D. F.A.S.

LECTURER OF THE UNITED PARISHES OF ST. MARY WOOLNOTH AND ST. MARY WOOLCHURCH HAW, AND LADY CAMDEN'S WEDNESDAY EVENING LECTURER AT THE CHURCH OF ST. LAWRENCE JEWRY, LONDON.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

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MEDITATIONS AND VOWS;

DIVINE AND MORAL:

SERVING FOR DIRECTIONS IN

CHRISTIAN AND CIVIL PRACTICE.

THREE CENTURIES.

BY JOSEPH HALL.

VOTUM AUCTORIS.

Quas ego non vano deprompsi è pectore leges,
Quæque ego vota tuli pacis honesta meæ,
Alme Deus (nec enim sine te vovisse juvabit:
Te sine nil facio, nil fugio sine te.)
Da placidè servem, et præsta servando quietem.
Sic mihi certa salus, sic mihi sancta quies.

3
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THE FIRST CENTURY

OF

MEDITATIONS AND VOWS;

DIVINE AND MORAL.

TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL

SIR ROBERT DRURY, KNIGHT;

ALL INCREASE OF TRUE HONOUR AND VIRTUE.

SIR:

THAT I have made these my homely Aphorisms public, needs no other reason, but that, though the world is furnished with other writings, even to satiety and surfeit, yet of those which reduce Christianity to practice, there is, at least, scarce enough: wherein, yet, I must needs confess, I had some eye to myself; for, having after a sort vowed this austere course of judgment and practice to myself, I thought it best to acquaint the world with it, that it may either witness my answerable proceeding, or check me in my straying therefrom. By which means, so many men as I live amongst, so many monitors I shall have; which shall point me to my own rules, and upbraid me with my aberrations. Why I have dedicated them to your name cannot be strange to any, that knows you my Patron and me your Pastor. The regard of which bond easily drew me on to consider, that, whereas my body, which was ever weak, began of late to languish more, it would not be inexpedient, at the worst, to leave behind me this little monument of that great respect which I deservedly bear you. And, if it shall please God to reprieve me until a longer day; yet, it shall not repent me to have sent this unworthy scrowl, to wait upon you in your necessary absence: neither shall it be, I hope, bootless for you, to adjoin these my mean speculations unto those grounds of virtue you have so happily laid; to which if they shall add but one scruple, it shall be to me sufficient joy, contentment, recompence.

From your Worship's humbly devoted,

Halstead, Dec. 4. JOSEPH HALL.

MEDITATIONS AND VOWS.

I.

In Meditation, those, which begin heavenly thoughts and prosecute them not, are like those, which kindle a fire under green wood, and leave it so soon as it but begins to flame; losing the hope of a good beginning, for want of seconding it with a suitable proceeding. When I set myself to meditate, I will not give over, till I come to an issue. It hath been said by some, that the beginning is as much as the midst; yea, more than all: but I say, the ending is more than the beginning.

II.

There is nothing, but man, that respecteth greatness: not God, not Nature, not Disease, not Death, not Judgment. Not God: he is no excepter of persons. Not Nature: we see the sons of princes born as naked, as the poorest; and the poor child as fair, well-favoured, strong, witty, as the heir of nobles. Not Disease, Death, Judgment: they sicken alike, die alike, fare alike after death. There is nothing, besides natural men, of whom goodness is not respected. I will honour greatness in others; but, for myself, I will esteem a dram of goodness worth a whole world of greatness.

III.

As there is a foolish wisdom, so there is a wise ignorance; in not prying into God's ark, not enquiring into things not revealed. I would fain know all that I need, and all that I may: I leave God's secrets to himself. It is happy for me, that God makes me of his Court, though not of his Council.

IV.

As there is no vacuity in nature, no more is there spiritually. Every vessel is full, if not of liquor, yet of air: so is the heart of man; though, by nature, it is empty of grace, yet it is full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Now, as it filleth with grace, so it is emptied of his evil qualities; as in a vessel, so much water as goes in, so much air goes out: but man's heart is a narrow-mouthed vessel, and receives grace but by drops; and therefore asks a long time to empty and fill. Now, as there be differences in degrees, and one heart is nearer to fulness than another; so the best vessel is not quite full, while it is in the body, because there are still remainders of corruption. I will neither be content with that measure of grace I have, nor impatient of God's delay; but every day I will

endeavour to have one drop added to the rest: so my last day shall fill up my vessel to the brim.

V.

Satan would seem to be mannerly and reasonable; making, as if he would be content with one half of the heart, whereas God challengeth all or none: as, indeed, He hath most reason to claim all, that made all. But this is nothing, but a crafty fetch of Satan; for he knows, that if he have any part, God will have none: so the whole falleth to his share alone. My heart, when it is both whole and at the best, is but a strait and unworthy lodging for God. If it were bigger and better, I would reserve it all for him. Satan may look in at my doors by a temptation; but he shall not have so much as one chamber-room set apart, for him to sojourn in.

VI.

I see, that, in natural motions, the nearer anything comes to his end, the swifter it moveth. I have seen great rivers, which, at their first rising out of some hill's side, might be covered with a bushel; which, after many miles, fill a very broad channel; and, drawing near to the sea, do even make a little sea in their own banks: so, the wind, at the first rising, is a little vapour from the crannies of the earth; and, passing forward about the earth, the further it goes, the more blustering and violent it waxeth. A Christian's motion, after he is regenerate, is made natural to God-ward; and therefore, the nearer he comes to heaven, the more zealous he is. A good man must be like the sun: not like Hezekiah's sun, that went backward; nor like Joshua's sun, that stood still; but David's sun, that, like a bridegroom, comes out of his chamber, and, as a champion, rejoiceth to run his race: only herein is the difference, that, when he comes to his high noon, he declineth not. However, therefore, the mind, in her natural faculties, follows the temperature of the body; yet, in these supernatural things, she quite crosses it: for, with the coldest complexion of age is joined, in those that are truly religious, the ferventest zeal and affection to good things; which is therefore the more reverenced and better acknowledged, because it cannot be ascribed to the hot spirits of youth. The Devil himself devised that old slander of early holiness; "A young Saint, an old Devil." Sometimes, young Devils have proved old Saints; never the contrary: but true Saints in youth, do always prove Angels in their age. I will strive to be ever good; but if I should not find myself best at last, I should fear I was never good at all.

VII.

Consent hearteneth sin; which a little dislike would have daunted, at first. As we say, "There would be no thieves, if no receivers;" so would there not be so many open mouths to detract and slander, if there were not as many open ears to entertain them. If I cannot stop other men's mouths from speaking ill, I will either open my mouth to reprove it, or else I will stop mine ears from

hearing it; and let him see in my face, that he hath no room in my heart.

VIII.

I have oft wondered, how fishes can retain their fresh taste, and yet live in salt waters; since I see that every other thing participates of the nature of the place, wherein it abides: so, the waters, passing through the channels of the earth, vary their savour with the veins of soil, through which they slide: so, brute creatures, transported from one region to another, alter their former quality, and degenerate by little and little. The like danger have I seen in the manners of men, conversing with evil companions in corrupt places: for, besides that it blemisheth our reputation and makes us thought ill though we be good, it breeds in us an insensible declination to ill; and works in us, if not an approbation, yet a less dislike of those sins, to which our ears and eyes are so continually inured. I may have a bad acquaintance: I will never have a wicked companion.

IX.

Expectation, in a weak mind, makes an evil, greater; and a good, less: but, in a resolved mind, it digests an evil, before it come; and makes a future good, long before, present. I will expect the worst, because it may come; the best, because I know it will come.

X.

Some promise what they cannot do; as Satan to Christ: some, what they could, but mean not to do; as the sons of Jacob to the Shechemites: some, what they meant for the time, and after retreat; as Laban to Jacob: some, what they do also give, but unwillingly; as Herod: some, what they willingly give and after repent them; as Joshua to the Gibeonites. So great distrust is there in man, whether from his impotency or faithlessness. As in other things, so in this, I see God is not like man: but, in whatever he promises, he approves himself most faithful, both in his ability and performances. I will therefore ever trust God on his bare word; even with hope, besides hope, above hope, against hope; and onwards, I will rely on him for small matters of this life: for how shall I hope to trust him in impossibilities, if I may not in likelihoods? How shall I depend on him, for raising my body from dust, and saving my soul; if I mistrust him for a crust of bread, towards my preservation?

XI.

If the world would make me his minion, he could give me but what he hath: and what hath he to give, but a smoke of honour, a shadow of riches, a sound of pleasures, a blast of fame; which when I have had in the best measure, I may be worse, I cannot be better? I can live no whit longer, no whit merrier, no whit happier. If he profess to hate me, what can he do, but disgrace me in my name, impoverish me in my estate, afflict me in my body? in all

which, it is easy, not to be ever the more miserable. I have been too long beguiled with the vain semblances of it: now, henceforth, accounting myself born to a better world, I will, in a holy loftiness, bear myself as one too good to be enamoured of the best pleasures, to be daunted with the greatest miseries, of this life.

XII.

I see there is no man so happy, as to have all things; and no man so miserable, as not to have some. Why should I look for a better condition, than all others? If I have somewhat, and that of the best things; I will in thankfulness enjoy them, and want the rest with contentment.

XIII.

Constraint makes an easy thing toilsome; whereas, again, love makes the greatest toil pleasant. How many miles do we ride and run, to see one silly beast follow another, with pleasure; which if we were commanded to measure, upon the charge of a superior, we should complain of weariness! I see the folly of the most men; that make their lives miserable, and their actions tedious, for want of love to that, they must do. I will first labour to settle in my heart a good affection to heavenly things: so, Lord, thy yoke shall be easy, and thy burden light.

XIV.

I am a stranger even at home: therefore, if the dogs of the world bark at me, I neither care, nor wonder.

XV.

It is the greatest madness in the world, to be a hypocrite in religious profession. Men hate thee, because thou art a Christian, so much as in appearance: God hates thee double, because thou art but in appearance: so, while thou hast the hatred of both, thou hast no comfort in thyself. Yet, if thou wilt not be good, as thou seemest; I hold it better, to seem ill, as thou art. An open wicked man doth much hurt, with notorious sins; but a hypocrite doth at last more shame goodness, by seeming good. I would rather be an open wicked man, than a hypocrite; but I would rather be no man, than either of them.

XVI.

When I cast down mine eyes upon my wants, upon my sins, upon my miseries; methinks no man should be worse, no man so ill as I, my means so many, so forcible, and almost violent; my progress so small, and insensible; my corruptions so strong; my infirmities so frequent, and remediless; my body so unanswerable to my mind: But, when I look up to the blessings that God hath enriched me withal, methinks I should soon be induced to think none more happy than myself: God is my Friend, and my Father; the world, not my master, but my slave: I have friends, not many, but so tried, that I dare trust them; an estate, not superfluous, not needy, yet nearer to defect than abundance; a calling, if despised of men, yet honourable with God; a body, not so strong as to

admit security, but often checking me in occasion of pleasure, nor yet so weak as to afflict me continually; a mind, not so furnished with knowledge that I may boast of it, nor yet so naked that I should despair of obtaining it: my miseries afford me joy; mine enemies, advantage: my account is cast up for another world. And, if thou think I have said too much good of myself, either I am thus, or I would be.

XVII.

The worldling's life is, of all other, most discomfortable: for, that, which is his God, doth not alway favour him; that, which should be, never.

XVIII.

There are three messengers of death; Casualty, Sickness, Age. The two first are doubtful; since many have recovered them both: the last is certain. The two first are sudden: the last leisurely and deliberate. As for all men, upon so many summons, so especially for an old man, it is a shame to be unprepared for death: for, where others see they may die, he sees he must die. I was long ago old enough to die: but if I live till age, I will think myself too old to live longer.

XIX.

I will not care what I have; whether much, or little. If little, my account shall be the less; if more, I shall do the more good, and receive the more glory.

XX.

I care not for any companion, but such as may teach me somewhat, or learn somewhat of me. Both these shall much pleasure me; one as an agent, the other as a subject to work upon: neither know I, whether more; for, though it be an excellent thing to learn, yet I learn but to teach others.

XXI.

If Earth, that is provided for mortality and is possessed by the Maker's enemies, have so much pleasure in it, that worldlings think it worth the account of their heaven; such a sun to enlighten it, such a heaven to wall it about, such sweet fruits and flowers to adorn it, such variety of creatures for the commodious use of it; what must Heaven needs be, that is provided for God himself, and his friends? How can it be less in worth, than God is above his creatures, and God's friends better than his enemies? I will not only be content, but desirous, to be dissolved.

XXII.

It is commonly seen, that boldness puts men forth before their time, before their ability. Wherein, we have seen many, that, like lapwings and partridges, have run away with some part of their shell on their heads: whence it follows, that, as they began boldly, so they proceed unprofitably, and conclude not without shame. I would rather be haled by force of others to great duties, than rush

upon them unbidden. It were better a man should want work, than that great works should want a man answerable to their weight.

XXIII.

I will use my friends, as Moses did his rod: while it was a rod, he held it familiarly in his hand; when once a serpent, he ran away from it.

XXIV.

I have seldom seen much ostentation, and much learning, met together. The sun, rising, and declining, makes long shadows; at midday when he is at highest, none at all. Besides that, skill, when it is too much shown, loseth the grace: as fresh coloured wares, if they be often opened, lose their brightness, and are soiled with much handling. I would rather applaud myself, for having much, that I shew not; than that others should applaud me, for shewing more than I have.

XXV.

An ambitious man is the greatest enemy to himself, of any in the world besides: for he still torments himself with hopes, and desires, and cares; which he might avoid, if he would remit of the height of his thoughts, and live quietly. My only ambition shall be, to rest in God's favour on earth, and to be a Saint in heaven.

XXVI.

There was never good thing easily come by. The heathen man could say, "God sells knowledge for sweat;" and so he doth honour for jeopardy. Never any man hath got either wealth or learning, with ease. Therefore, the greatest good must needs be most difficult. How shall I hope to get Christ, if I take no pains for him? And if, in all other things, the difficulty of obtaining whets the mind so much the more to seek, why should it in this alone daunt me? I will not care what I do, what I suffer, so I may win Christ. If men can endure such cutting, such lancing, and searing of their bodies, to protract a miserable life yet a while longer, what pain should I refuse for eternity?

XXVII.

If I die, the world shall miss me but a little: I shall miss it less. Not it me; because it hath such store of better men: not I it; because it hath so much ill, and I shall have so much happiness.

XXVIII.

Two things make a man set by; Dignity, and Desert. Amongst fools, the first without the second is sufficient: amongst wise men, the second without the first. Let me deserve well; though I be not advanced. The conscience of my worth shall cheer me more in others' contempt, than the approbation of others can comfort me against the secret check of my own unworthiness.

XXIX.

The best qualities do so cleave to their subjects, that they cannot be communicated to others: for, whereas patrimony and vulgar account of honour follow the blood, in many generations; virtue is not traduced in propagation, nor learning bequeathed by our Will to our heirs; lest the givers should wax proud, and the receivers negligent. I will account nothing my own, but what I have gotten; nor that my own, because it is more of gift than desert.

XXX.

Then only is the Church most happy, when Truth and Peace kiss each other; and then miserable, when either of them balk the way, or when they meet and kiss not: for, truth without peace, is turbulent; and peace without truth, is secure injustice. Though I love peace well; yet I love main truths better: and, though I love all truths well; yet I would rather conceal a small truth, than disturb a common peace.

XXXI.

An indiscreet good action, is little better than a discreet mischief. For, in this, the doer wrongs only the patient: but, in that other, the wrong is done to the good action; for both it makes a good thing odious (as many good tales are marred in telling,) and, besides, it prejudices a future opportunity. I will rather let pass a good gale of wind, and stay on the shore; than launch forth, when I know the wind will be contrary.

XXXII.

The World teacheth me, that it is madness to leave behind me those goods, that I may carry with me: Christianity teacheth me, that what I charitably give alive, I carry with me dead: and Experience teacheth me, that what I leave behind, I lose. I will carry that treasure with me by giving it, which the worldling loseth by keeping it: so, while his corpse shall carry nothing but a winding cloth to his grave, I shall be richer under the earth, than I was above it.

XXXIII.

Every worldling is a hypocrite; for, while his face naturally looks upward to heaven, his heart grovels beneath on the earth: yet, if I would admit of any discord in the inward and outward parts; I would have a heart that should look up to heaven in a holy contemplation of the things above, and a countenance cast down to the earth in humiliation. This only dissimilitude is pleasing to God.

XXXIV.

The heart of man is a short word, a small substance, scarce enough to give a kite one meal; yet great in capacity: yea, so infinite in desire, that the round globe of the world cannot fill the three corners of it. When it desires more, and cries, "Give,

give," I will set it over to that Infinite Good, where, the more it hath, it may desire more, and see more to be desired. When it desires but what it needeth, my hands shall soon satisfy it: for, if either of them may contain it, when it is without the body; much more may both of them fill it, while it is within.

XXXV.

With men it is a good rule; to try first, and then to trust: with God it is contrary. I will first trust him, as most wise, omnipotent, merciful; and try him afterwards. I know it is as impossible for him to deceive me, as not to be.

XXXVI.

As Christ was both a Lamb and a Lion; so is every Christian: a Lamb, for patience in suffering, and innocence of life; a Lion, for boldness in his innocency. I would so order my courage and mildness, that I may be neither lion-like, in my conversation; nor sheepish, in the defence of a good cause.

XXXVII.

The godly sow in tears, and reap in joy. The seed-time is commonly waterish and lowering. I will be content with a wet spring, so I may be sure of a clear and joyful harvest.

XXXVIII.

Every man hath a heaven and a hell. Earth is the wicked man's heaven; his hell is to come: on the contrary, the godly have their hell upon earth, where they are vexed with temptations and afflictions, by Satan and his complices; their heaven is above, in endless happiness. If it be ill with me on earth, it is well my torment is so short, and so easy: I will not be so covetous, to hope for two heavens.

XXXIX.

Man, on his deathbed, hath a double prospect; which, in his lifetime, the interposition of pleasure and miseries debarred him from. The good man looks upward, and sees Heaven open, with Stephen; and the glorious Angels, ready to carry up his soul: the wicked man looks downward, and sees three terrible spectacles: Death, Judgment, Hell, one beyond another; and all to be passed through, by his soul. I marvel not, that the godly have been so cheerful in death, that those torments, whose very sight hath overcome the beholders, have seemed easy to them. I marvel not, that a wicked man is so loth to hear of death; so dejected, when he feeleth sickness; and so desperate, when he feeleth the pangs of death: nor that every Balaam would fain die the death of the righteous. Henceforth, I will envy none, but a good man: I will pity nothing so much, as the prosperity of the wicked.

XL.

Not to be afflicted, is a sign of weakness: for, therefore God imposeth no more on me, because he sees I can bear no more. God will not make choice of a weak champion. When I am

stronger, I will look for more: and when I sustain more, it shall more comfort me, that God finds me strong; than it shall grieve me, to be pressed with a heavy affliction.

XLI.

That the wicked have peace in themselves, is no wonder: they are as sure, as temptation can make them. No prince makes war with his own subjects. The godly are still enemies: therefore, they must look to be assaulted both by stratagems and violence. Nothing shall more joy me, than my inward unquietness. A just war is a thousand times more happy, than an ill-conditioned peace.

XLII.

Goodness is so powerful, that it can make things simply evil (namely, our sins) good to us: not good in nature, but good in the event; good, when they are done, not good to be done. Sin is so powerful, that it can turn the holiest ordinances of God into itself. But herein our sin goes beyond our goodness; That sin defiles a man or action otherwise good, but all the goodness of the world cannot justify one sin: as the holy flesh in the skirt, makes not the bread holy that toucheth it; but the unclean, touching a holy thing, defileth it. I will loath every evil for its own sake: I will do good; but not trust to it.

XLIII.

Fools measure good actions, by the event after they are done: wise men beforehand, by judgment, upon the rules of reason and faith. Let me do well: let God take charge of the success. If it be well accepted, it is well: if not, my thank is with God.

XLIV.

He was never good man, that amends not: for, if he were good, he must needs desire to be better. Grace is so sweet, that whoever tastes of it must needs long after more: and, if he desire it, he will endeavour it; and, if he do but endeavour, God will crown it with success. God's family admitteth of no Dwarfs, which are unthriving, and stand at a stay; but men of measures. Whatever become of my body or my estate, I will ever labour, to find somewhat added to the stature of my soul.

XLV.

Pride is the most dangerous of all sins: for, both it is most insinuative, having crept into Heaven and Paradise; and most dangerous, where it is: for, where all other temptations are about evil, this alone is conversant only about good things; and one dram of it poisons many measures of grace. I will not be more afraid of doing good things amiss, than of being proud when I have well performed them.

XLVI.

Not only commission makes a sin. A man is guilty of all those sins he hateth not. If I cannot avoid all, yet I will hate all.

XLVII.

Prejudice is so great an enemy to truth, that it makes the mind incapable of it. In matters of faith, I will first lay a sure ground, and then believe, though I cannot argue; holding the conclusion, in spite of the premises: but, in other less matters, I will not so forestall my mind with resolution, as that I will not be willing to be better informed. Neither will I say in myself, "I will hold it, therefore it shall be truth;" but, "This is truth, therefore I will hold it." I will not strive for victory; but for truth.

XLVIII.

Drunkenness and Covetousness do much resemble one another: for, the more a man drinks, the more he thirsteth; and the more he hath, still the more he coveteth. And, for their effects, besides other, both of them have the power of transforming a man into a beast; and, of all other beasts, into a Swine. The former is evident to sense: the other, though more obscure, is no more questionable. The covetous man, in two things, plainly resembleth a Swine; That he ever roots in the earth, not so much as looking towards heaven; That he never doth good, till his death. In desiring, my rule shall be, necessity of nature or estate: in having, I will account that my good, which doeth me good.

XLIX.

I acknowledge no Master of Requests in heaven, but one; Christ, my Mediator. I know I cannot be so happy, as not to need him; nor so miserable, that he should contemn me. I will always ask; and that of none, but where I am sure to speed; but where there is so much store, that when I have had the most, I shall leave no less behind. Though numberless drops be in the sea; yet, if one be taken out of it, it hath so much the less, though insensibly: but God, because he is infinite, can admit of no diminution. Therefore are men niggardly, because the more they give, the less they have; but thou, Lord, mayest give what thou wilt, without abatement of thy store. Good prayers never came weeping home: I am sure I shall receive, either what I ask, or what I should ask.

L.

I see, that a fit booty, many times, makes a thief: and many would be proud, if they had but the common causes of their neighbours. I account this none of the least favours of God, that the world goes no better forward with me: for, I fear, if my estate were better to the world, it might be worse to God. As it is a happy necessity that enforceth to good; so is that next happy, that hinders from evil.

LI.

It is the basest love of all others, that is for a benefit: for, herein we love not another, so much as ourselves. Though there were no Heaven, O Lord, I would love thee.: now there is one, I will

esteem it, I will desire it; yet still I will love thee, for thy goodness' sake. Thyself is reward enough, though thou broughtest no more.

LII.

I see men point the field; and desperately jeopard their lives, as prodigal of their blood, in the revenge of a disgraceful word, against themselves; while they can be content to hear God pulled out of heaven with blasphemy, and not feel so much as a rising of their blood: which argues our cold love to God, and our over fervent affection to ourselves. In mine own wrongs, I will hold patience laudable; but, in God's injuries, impious.

LIII.

It is a hard thing, to speak well: but it is harder, to be well silent; so as it may be free from suspicion of affectation, or sullenness, or ignorance: else, loquacity, and not silence, would be a note of wisdom. Herein I will not care how little, but how well. He said well for this, "Not that, which is much, is well; but that, which is well, is much."

LIV.

There is nothing more odious, than fruitless old age. Now, for that no tree bears fruit in Autumn unless it blossom in the Spring, to the end that my age may be profitable and laden with ripe fruit, I will endeavour, that my youth may be studious and flowered with the blossoms of learning and observation.

LV.

Revenge commonly hurts both the offerer and sufferer: as we see in the foolish Bee (though in all other things commendable; yet herein the pattern of fond spitefulness), which, in her anger, envenometh the flesh, and loseth her sting; and so lives a Drone ever after. I account it the only valour, to remit a wrong; and will applaud it to myself, as right noble and Christian, that I might hurt and will not.

LVI.

He, that lives well, cannot choose but die well: for, if he die suddenly, yet he dies not unpreparedly; if, by leisure, the conscience of his well-led life makes his death more comfortable. But it is seldom seen, that he, which liveth ill, dieth well: for the conscience of his former evils, his present pain, and the expectation and fear of greater, so take up his heart, that he cannot seek God. And now it is just with God, not to be sought, or not to be found; because he sought to him in his life-time, and was repulsed. Whereas, therefore, there are usually two main cares of good men; to Live well, and Die well: I will have but this one; to Live well.

LVII.

With God there is no free man, but his servant; though in the gallies: no slave, but the sinner; though in a palace: none noble, but the virtuous; if never so basely descended: none rich, but he, that possesseth God; even in rags: none wise, but he, that is a

fool to himself and the world: none happy, but he, whom the world pities. Let me be free, noble, rich, wise, happy to God; I pass not what I am to the world.

LVIII.

When the mouth praiseth, man heareth; when the heart, God heareth. Every good prayer knocketh at heaven, for a blessing: but an importunate prayer pierceth it, though as hard as brass; and makes way for itself, into the ears of the Almighty. And, as it ascends lightly up, carried with the wings of faith; so it comes ever laden down again, upon our heads. In my prayers, my thoughts shall not be guided by my words; but my words shall follow my thoughts.

LIX.

If that servant were condemned for evil, that gave God no more than his own, which he had received; what shall become of them, that rob God of his own? If God gain a little glory by me, I shall gain more by him. I will labour so to husband the stock, that God hath left in my hands, that I may return my soul better than I received it; and that he may make it better than I return it.

LX.

Heaven is compared to a hill: and therefore is figured by Olympus, among the heathen: by Mount Sion, in God's Book: Hell, contrariwise, to a Pit. The ascent to the one is hard, therefore; and the descent of the other, easy and headlong: and so, as if we once begin to fall, the recovery is most difficult; and not one, of many, stays, till he comes to the bottom. I will be content, to pant, and blow, and sweat in climbing up to Heaven: as, contrarily, I will be wary of setting the first step downward, towards the Pit. For, as there is a Jacob's Ladder into heaven; so there are blind stairs, that go winding down into death, whereof each makes way for other. From the object is raised an ill suggestion: suggestion draws on delight; delight, consent; consent, endeavour; endeavour, practice; practice, custom; custom, excuse; excuse, defence; defence, obstinacy; obstinacy, boasting of sin; boasting, a reprobate sense. I will watch over my ways: and do thou, Lord, watch over me, that I may avoid the first degrees of sin. And, if those overtake my frailty, yet keep me, that presumptuous sins prevail not over me. Beginnings are with more ease and safety declined, when we are free; than proceedings, when we have begun.

LXI.

It is fitter for youth, to learn than teach; and for age, to teach than learn: and yet fitter for an old man to learn, than to be ignorant. I know, I shall never know so much, that I cannot learn more: and I hope I shall never live so long, as till I be too old to learn.

LXII.

I never loved those Salamanders, that are never well, but when they are in the fire of contention. I will rather suffer a thousand

wrongs, than offer one: I will suffer a hundred, rather than return one: I will suffer many, ere I will complain of one, and endeavour to right it by contending. I have ever found, that, to strive with my superior, is furious; with my equal, doubtful; with my inferior, sordid and base; with any, full of unquietness.

LXIII.

The praise of a good speech standeth in words and matter: matter, which is as a fair and well-featured body; elegance of words, which is as a neat and well-fashioned garment. Good matter, slubbered up in rude and careless words, is made loathsome to the hearer; as a good body, mis-shapen with unhandsome clothes. Elegancy, without soundness, is no better than a nice vanity. Although, therefore, the most hearers are like bees, that go all to the flowers; never regarding the good herbs, that are of as wholesome use, as the other of fair shew: yet, let my speech strive to be profitable; plausible, as it happens. Better the coat be mis-shapen, than the body.

LXIV.

I see, that, as black and white colours, to the eyes; so is the vice and virtue of others, to the judgment of men. Vice gathers the beams of the sight in one; that the eye may see it, and be intent upon it: virtue scatters them abroad; and therefore hardly admits of a perfect apprehension. Whence it comes to pass, that, as judgment is according to sense, we do so soon espy, and so earnestly censure a man for, one vice: letting pass many laudable qualities undiscerned; or, at least, unacknowledged. Yea, whereas every man is once a fool, and doeth that perhaps in one fit of his folly, which he shall at leisure repent of (as Noah, in one hour's drunkenness, uncovered those secrets, which were hid six hundred years before,) the world is hereupon ready to call in question all his former integrity, and to exclude him from the hope of any future amendment. Since God hath given me two eyes; the one shall be busied about the present fault that I see, with a detesting commiseration; the other, about the commendable qualities of the offender, not without an unpartial approbation of them. So shall I do God no wrong, in robbing him of the glory of his gifts, mixed with infirmities: nor yet, in the mean time, encourage vice; while I do distinctly reserve for it, a due portion of hatred.

LXV.

God is above man; the brute creatures, under him; he, set in the midst. Lest he should be proud that he had infinite creatures under him, that one is infinite degrees above him. I do, therefore, owe awe unto God; mercy, to the inferior creatures: knowing, that they are my fellows, in respect of creation; whereas there is no proportion betwixt me and my Maker.

LXVI.

One said, "It is good to inure the mouth to speak well; for good speech is many times drawn into the affection:" but I would

fear, that, speaking well without feeling, were the next way to procure a habitual hypocrisy. Let my good words follow good affections; not go before them. I will therefore speak as I think: but, withal, I will labour to think well; and then, I know, I cannot but speak well.

LXVII.

When I consider my soul, I could be proud, to think of how divine a nature and quality it is: but when I cast down mine eyes to my body, as the swan to her black legs; and see what loathsome matter issues from the mouth, nostrils, ears, pores, and other passages, and how most carrion-like of all other creatures it is after death; I am justly ashamed, to think that so excellent a guest dwells not in a more cleanly dunghill.

LXVIII.

Every worldling is a madman: for, besides that he preferreth profit and pleasure to virtue, the world to God, earth to heaven, time to eternity; he pampers the body, and starves the soul. He feeds one fowl a hundred times, that it may feed him but once: and seeks all lands and seas for dainties; not caring whether any, or what repast, he provideth for his soul. He clothes the body with all rich ornaments; that it may be as fair without, as it is filthy within: while his soul goes bare and naked, having not a rag of knowledge to cover it. Yea, he cares not to destroy his soul, to please the body; when, for the salvation of the soul, he will not so much as hold the body short of the least pleasure. What is, if this be not, a reasonable kind of madness? Let me enjoy my soul no longer, than I prefer it to my body. Let me have a deformed, lean, crooked, unhealthful, neglected body; so that I may find my soul sound, strong, well furnished, well disposed both for earth and heaven.

LXIX.

Asa was sick but of his feet, far from the heart: yet, because he sought to the physicians, not to God, he escaped not. Hezekiah was sick to die: yet, because he trusted to God, not to physicians, he was restored. Means, without God, cannot help: God, without means, can; and often doth. I will use good means; not rest in them.

LXX.

A man's best monument is his virtuous actions. Foolish is the hope of immortality and future praise, by the cost of senseless stone; when the passenger shall only say, "Here lies a fair stone and a filthy carcase." That only can report thee rich: but, for other praises, thyself must build thy monument, alive; and write thy own epitaph, in honest and honourable actions: which are so much more noble than the other, as living men are better than dead stones. Nay, I know not if the other be not the way to work a perpetual succession of infamy; while the censorious reader, upon occasion thereof, shall comment upon thy bad life: whereas, in this, every man's heart is a tomb; and every man's tongue writeth an

epitaph upon the well behaved. Either I will procure me such a monument, to be remembered by; or else, it is better to be inglorious, than infamous.

LXXI.

The basest things are ever most plentiful. History and experience tell us, that some kind of mouse breedeth one hundred and twenty young ones in one nest; whereas the lion, or elephant, beareth but one at once. I have ever found, The least wit yieldeth the most words. It is both the surest and wisest way, to speak little, and think more.

LXXII.

An evil man is clay to God; wax to the Devil. God may stamp him into powder, or temper him anew; but none of his means can melt him. Contrariwise, a good man is God's wax; and Satan's clay: he relents at every look of God; but is not stirred at any temptation. I would rather bow than break, to God: but, for Satan, or the world, I would rather be broken in pieces with their violence, than suffer myself to be bowed unto their obedience.

LXXIII.

It is an easy matter, for a man to be careless of himself; and yet much easier to be enamoured of himself: for, if he be a Christian; while he contemneth the world perfectly, it is hard for him to reserve a competent measure of love to himself: if a worldling, it is not possible but he must over-love himself. I will strive for the mean of both: and so hate the world, that I may care for myself; and so care for myself, that I be not in love with the world.

LXXIV.

I will hate popularity and ostentation; as ever dangerous, but most of all in God's business: which whoso affect, do as ill spokesmen; who, when they are sent to woo for God, speak for themselves. I know how dangerous it is to have God my rival.

LXXV.

Earth affords no sound contentment: for, what is there under heaven not troublesome, besides that which is called pleasure? and, that, in the end, I find most irksome of all other. My soul shall ever look upward, for joy; and downward, for penitence.

LXXVI.

God is ever with me, ever before me. I know, he cannot but over-see me always; though my eyes be held, that I see him not: yea, he is still within me; though I feel him not: neither is there any moment, that I can live without God. Why do I not, therefore, always live with him? Why do I not account all hours lost, wherein I enjoy him not?

LXXVII.

There is no man so happy as the Christian. When he looks up unto heaven, he thinks, "That is my home: the God, that made it and owns it, is my Father: the angels, more glorious in nature

than myself, are my attendants: mine enemies are my vassals." Yea, those things, which are the terriblest of all to the wicked, are most pleasant to him. When he hears God thunder above his head, he thinks, "This is the voice of my Father." When he remembereth the Tribunal of the Last Judgment, he thinks, "It is my Saviour, that sits in it:" when death, he esteems it but as the angel set before Paradise; which, with one blow, admits him to eternal joy. And, which is most of all, nothing in earth or hell can make him miserable. There is nothing in the world, worth envying, but a Christian.

LXXVIII.

As man is a little world; so every Christian is a little Church, within himself. As the Church, therefore, is sometimes in the wane, through persecution; other times, in her full glory and brightness: so let me expect myself sometimes drooping under temptations, and sadly hanging down the head for the want of the feeling of God's presence; at other times, carried with the full sail of a resolute assurance to heaven: knowing, that, as it is a Church at the weakest stay; so shall I, in my greatest dejection, hold the child of God.

LXXIX.

Temptations, on the right hand, are more perilous, than those on the left; and destroy a thousand, to the others' ten: as the sun, more usually, causeth the traveller to cast off his cloak, than the wind. For, those on the left hand miscarry men but two ways: to distrust, and denial of God; more rare sins: but the other, to all the rest, wherewith men's lives are so commonly defiled. The spirit of Christians is like the English jet, whereof we read, that it is fired with water, quenched with oil. And these two, prosperity and adversity, are like heat and cold: the one gathers the powers of the soul together, and makes them able to resist, by uniting them; the other diffuses them, and, by such separation, makes them easier to conquer. I hold it, therefore, as praise-worthy with God, for a man to contemn a proffered honour or pleasure, for conscience, sake; as, on the rack, not to deny his profession. When these are offered, I will not nibble at the bait; that I be not taken with the hook.

LXXX.

God is Lord of my body also: and therefore challengeth as well reverent gesture, as inward devotion. I will ever, in my prayers, either stand, as a servant, before my Master; or kneel, as a subject, to my Prince.

LXXXI.

I have not been in others' breasts; but, for my own part, I never tasted of ought, that might deserve the name of pleasure. And, if I could, yet a thousand pleasures cannot countervail one torment: because the one may be exquisite; the other, not without composition. And, if not one torment, much less a thousand. And if not for a moment, much less for eternity. And if not the torment of

a part, much less of the whole. For, if the pain but of a tooth be so intolerable, what shall the racking of the whole body be? And, if of the body, what shall that be, which is primarily of the soul? If there be pleasures that I hear not of, I will be wary of buying them so over-dear.

LXXXII.

As hypocrisy is a common counterfeit of all virtues; so there is no special virtue, which is not, to the very life of it, seemingly resembled, by some special vice. So, devotion is counterfeited by superstition; good thrift, by niggardliness; charity, with vain-glorious pride. For, as charity is bounteous to the poor; so is vain-glory to the wealthy: as charity sustains all, for truth; so pride, for a vain praise: both of them make a man courteous and affable. So the substance of every virtue is in the heart: which, since it hath not a window made into it, by the Creator of it, but is reserved under lock and key for his own view; I will judge only by appearance. I would rather wrong myself, by credulity; than others, by unjust censures and suspicions.

LXXXIII.

Every man hath a kingdom within himself. Reason, as the Princess, dwells in the highest and inwardest room. The Senses are the Guard and Attendants on the Court; without whose aid, nothing is admitted into the Presence. The supreme faculties, as Will, Memory &c. are the Peers. The Outward Parts and Inward Affections, are the Commons. Violent Passions are as Rebels, to disturb the common peace. I would not be a Stoic, to have no passions; for that were to overthrow this inward government God hath erected in me: but a Christian, to order those I have. And, for that I see, that as, in commotions, one mutinous person draws on more; so, in passions, that one makes way for the extremity of another (as, excess of love causeth excess of grief, upon the loss of what we loved:) I will do as wise Princes use, to those they misdoubt for faction; so hold them down and keep them bare, that their very impotency and remissness shall afford me security.

LXXXIV.

I look upon the things of this life, as an owner, as a stranger: as an owner, in their right; as a stranger, in their use. I see that owning is but a conceit, besides using: I can use, as I lawfully may, other men's commodities as my own; walk in their woods, look on their fair houses, with as much pleasure as my own: yet, again, I will use my own, as if it were another's; knowing, that though I hold them by right, yet it is only by tenure at will.

LXXXV.

There is none like to Luther's three masters; Prayer, Temptation, Meditation. Temptation stirs up holy meditation: meditation prepares to prayer: and prayer makes profit of temptation; and fetcheth all divine knowledge from heaven. Of others, I may

learn the theory of Divinity; of these only, the practice. Other masters teach me, by rote, to speak, parrot-like, of heavenly things; these alone, with feeling and understanding.

LXXXVI.

Affectation is the greatest enemy, both of doing well, and good acceptance of what is done. I hold it the part of a wise man, to endeavour rather that fame may follow him, than go before him.

LXXXVII.

I see a number, which, with Shimei, while they seek their servant, which is riches, lose their souls. No worldly thing shall draw me without the gates, within which God hath confined me.

LXXXVIII.

It is a hard thing, for a man to find weariness in pleasure, while it lasteth; or contentment in pain, while he is under it: after both, indeed, it is easy. Yet both of these must be found in both; or else we shall be drunken with pleasures, and overwhelmed with sorrow. As those, therefore, which should eat some dish, over-deliciously sweet, do allay it with tart sauce, that they may not be cloyed; and those, that are to receive bitter pills, that they may not be annoyed with their unpleasing taste roll them in sugar: so, in all pleasures, it is best to labour, not how to make them most delightful, but how to moderate them from excess; and, in all sorrows, so to settle our hearts in true grounds of comfort, that we may not care so much for being bemoaned of others, as how to be most contented in ourselves.

LXXXIX.

In ways, we see travellers choose not the fairest and greenest, if it be either cross or contrary; but the nearest, though miry and uneven: so, in opinions, let me follow not the plausiblest, but the truest, though more perplexed.

XC.

Christian society is like a bundle of sticks laid together, whereof one kindles another. Solitary men have fewest provocations to evil; but, again, fewest incitations to good. So much, as doing good is better than not doing evil, will I account Christian good-fellowship better than an eremitish and melancholy solitariness.

XCI.

I would rather confess my ignorance, than falsely profess knowledge. It is no shame, not to know all things: but it is a just shame, to over-reach in any thing.

XCII.

Sudden extremity is a notable trial of faith, or any other disposition of the soul. For, as, in a sudden fear, the blood gathers to the heart, for guarding of that part which is principal: so the powers of the soul combine themselves in a hard exigent, that they may

be easily judged of. The faithful, more suddenly than any casualty, can lift up his heart to his stay in heaven: whereas the worldling stands amazed, and distraught with the evil, because he hath no refuge to fly unto; for, not being acquainted with God in his peace, how should he but have him to seek in his extremity? When therefore some sudden stitch girds me in the side, like to be the messenger of death; or, when the sword of my enemy, in an unexpected assault, threatens my body; I will seriously note how I am affected: so the suddenest evil, as it shall not come unlooked for, shall not go away unthought of. If I find myself courageous and heavenly-minded, I will rejoice in the truth of God's grace in me; knowing, that one dram of tried faith, is worth a whole pound of speculative; and that, which once stood by me, will never fail me: if dejected and heartless, herein I will acknowledge cause of humiliation; and, with all care and earnestness, seek to store myself against the dangers following.

XCIII.

The rules of civil policy may well be applied to the mind. As therefore for a Prince, that he may have good success against either rebels or foreign enemies, it is a sure axiom, "divide and rule;" but when he is once seated in the throne over loyal subjects, "unite and rule:" So, in the regiment of the soul, there must be variance set in the judgment, and the conscience and affections; that that, which is amiss, may be subdued: but, when all parts are brought to order, it is the only course to maintain their peace; that, all seeking to establish and help each other, the whole may prosper. Always to be at war, is desperate; always at peace, secure and over-epicure-like. I do account a secure peace, a just occasion of this civil dissension, in myself; and a true Christian peace, the end of all my secret wars: which when I have atchieved, I shall reign with comfort; and never will be quiet, till I have atchieved it.

XCIV.

I brought sin enough with me into the world to repent of, all my life; though I should never actually sin: and sin enough actually, every day, to sorrow for; though I had brought none with me into the world: but, laying both together, my time is rather too short for my repentance. It were madness in me, to spend my short life in jollity and pleasure, whereof I have so small occasion; and neglect the opportunity of my so just sorrow: especially since before I came into the world, I sinned; after I am gone out of the world, the contagion of my sin past shall add to the guilt of it: yet, in both these states, I am uncapable of repentance. I will do that while I may, which, when I have neglected, is unrecoverable.

XCV.

Ambition is torment enough, for an enemy: for it affords as much discontentment in enjoying, as in want; making men like poisoned rats: which, when they have tasted of their bane, cannot rest till they

drink; and then can much less rest, till their death. It is better for me to live in the wise men's stocks, in a contented want; than in a fool's paradise, to vex myself with wilful unquietness.

XCVI.

It is not possible, but a conceited man must be a fool: for, that overweening opinion, he hath of himself, excludes all opportunity of purchasing knowledge. Let a vessel be once full of never so base liquor, it will not give room to the costliest; but spills beside whatsoever is infused. The proud man, though he be empty of good substance, yet is full of conceit. Many men had proved wise, if they had not so thought themselves. I am empty enough, to receive knowledge enough. Let me think myself but so bare as I am; and more I need not. O Lord, do thou teach me how little, how nothing I have; and give me no more, than I know I want.

XCVII.

Every man hath his turn of sorrow; whereby, some more, some less, all men are in their times miserable. I never yet could meet with the man, that complained not of somewhat. Before sorrow come, I will prepare for it: when it is come, I will welcome it: when it goes, I will take but half a farewell of it; as still expecting his return.

XCVIII.

There be three things that follow an injury, so far as it concerneth ourselves; (for, as the offence toucheth God, it is above our reach;) revenge, censure, satisfaction: which must be remitted of the merciful man. Yet not all at all times: but revenge always, leaving it to him that can and will do it; censure, ofttimes; satisfaction, sometimes. He, that deceives me oft, though I must forgive him; yet charity binds me not, not to censure him for untrusty: and he, that hath endamaged me much, cannot plead breach of charity, in my seeking his restitution. I will so remit wrongs, as I may not encourage others to offer them; and so retain them, as I may not induce God to retain mine to him.

XCIX.

Garments, that have once one rent in them, are subject to be torn on every nail and every brier; and glasses, that are once cracked, are soon broken: such is a man's good name, once tainted with just reproach. Next to the approbation of God and the testimony of mine own conscience, I will seek for a good reputation with men: not, by close carriage, concealing faults, that they may not be known, to my shame; but avoiding all vices, that I may not deserve it. The efficacy of the agent, is in the patient well disposed. It is hard for me ever to do good, unless I be reputed good.

C.

Many vegetable and many brute creatures exceed man in length of age: which hath opened the mouths of heathen philosophers, to accuse nature, as a step-mother to man; who hath given him the

least time to live, that only could make use of his time in getting knowledge. But herein religion doth most magnify God, in his wisdom and justice; teaching us, that other creatures live long, and perish to nothing: only man recompenses the shortness of his life, with eternity after it; that the sooner he dies well, the sooner he comes to perfection of knowledge, which he might in vain seek below; the sooner he dies ill, the less hurt he doth with his knowledge. There is great reason then, why man should live long; greater, why he should die early. I will never blame God, for making me too soon happy; for changing my ignorance, for knowledge; my corruption, for immortality; my infirmities, for perfection: *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.*

THE SECOND CENTURY

OF

MEDITATIONS AND VOWS;

DIVINE AND MORAL.

TO THE RIGHT VIRTUOUS AND WORSHIPFUL LADY,

THE LADY DRURY,

ALL INCREASE OF GRACE.

MADAM:

I KNOW your Christian ingenuity such, that you will not grudge others the communication of this your private right: which yet I durst not have presumed to adventure, if I feared, that either the benefit of it would be less, or the acceptation. Now it shall be no less yours: only, it shall be more known to be yours. Vouchsafe therefore to take part with your worthy husband, of these my simple Meditations. And, if your long and gracious experience have written you a larger volume of wholesome laws, and better informed you by precepts fetched from your own feeling, than I can hope for, by my bare speculation: yet, where these my not unlikely rules shall accord with yours, let your redoubled assent allow them, and they confirm it. I made them not for the Eye; but for the Heart: neither do I commend them to your Reading, but your Practice: wherein also it shall not be enough, that you are a mere and ordinary agent, but that you be a pattern propounded unto others' imitation. So shall your virtuous and holy progress, besides your own peace and happiness, be my crown and rejoicing, in the day of our common appearance.

Halsted,
December 4.

Your Ladyship's humbly devoted,

JOSEPH HALL.

MEDITATIONS AND VOWS.

I.

A man, under God's affliction, is like a bird in a net; the more he striveth, the more he is entangled. God's decree cannot be eluded with impatience. What I cannot avoid, I will learn to bear.

II.

I find that all worldly things require a long labour, in getting; and afford a short pleasure, in enjoying them. I will not care much, for what I have; nothing, for what I have not.

III.

I see natural bodies forsake their own place and condition, for the preservation of the whole: but, of all other creatures, man; and, of all other men, Christians, have the least interest in themselves. I will live, as given to others; lent only, to myself.

IV.

That, which is said of the elephant, that, being guilty of his deformity, he cannot abide to look on his own face in the water, but seeks for troubled and muddy channels; we see well moralized, in men of evil conscience, who know their souls are so filthy, that they dare not so much as view them; but shift off all checks of their former iniquity, with vain excuses of good-fellowship. Whence it is, that every small reprehension so galls them: because it calls the eyes of the soul home to itself, and makes them see a glimpse of what they would not. So have I seen a foolish and timorous patient, which, knowing his wound very deep, would not endure the chirurgeon to search it: whereon what can ensue, but a festering of the part, and a danger of the whole body? So I have seen many prodigal wasters run so far in books, that they cannot abide to hear of reckoning. It hath been an old and true proverb, "Oft and even reckonings make long friends." I will oft sum up my estate with God; that I may know what I have to expect, and answer for. Neither shall my score run on so long with God, that I shall not know my debts, or fear an audit, or despair of payment.

V.

I account this body, nothing, but a close prison to my soul; and the earth a larger prison to my body. I may not break prison, till I be loosed by death: but I will leave it, not unwillingly, when I am loosed.

VI.

The common fears of the world are causeless, and ill-placed. No man fears to do ill: every man to suffer ill: wherein, if we consider it well, we shall find that we fear our best friends. For my part, I

have learned more of God and of myself, in one week's extremity, than all my whole life's prosperity had taught me afore. And, in reason and common experience, prosperity usually makes us forget our death; adversity, on the other side, makes us neglect our life. Now, if we measure both of these by their effects, forgetfulness of death makes us secure; neglect of this life makes us careful of a better. So much, therefore, as neglect of life is better than forgetfulness of death, and watchfulness better than security; so much more beneficial will I esteem adversity, than prosperity.

VII.

Even grief itself is pleasant to the remembrance, when it is once past: as joy is, while it is present. I will not, therefore, in my conceit, make any so great difference betwixt joy and grief: since grief past is joyful; and long expectation of joy is grievous.

VIII.

Every sickness is a little death. I will be content to die oft, that I may die once well.

IX.

Ofttimes those things, which have been sweet in opinion, have proved bitter in experience. I will, therefore, ever suspend my resolute judgment, until the trial and event: in the mean while, I will fear the worst, and hope the best.

X.

In all divine and moral good things, I would fain keep that I have, and get that I want. I do not more loath all other covetousness, than I affect this. In all these things alone, I profess never to have enough. If I may encrease them, therefore, either by labouring, or begging, or usury, I shall leave no means unattempted.

XI.

Some children are of that nature, that they are never well, but while the rod is over them: such am I to God. Let him beat me, so he amend me: let him take all away from me, so he give me himself.

XII.

There must not be one uniform proceeding with all men, in reprehension; but that must vary, according to the disposition of the reproved. I have seen some men as thorns, which, easily touched, hurt not; but, if hard and unwarily, fetch blood of the hand: others, as nettles, which if they be nicely handled, sting and prick; but, if hard and roughly pressed, are pulled up without harm. Before I take any man in hand, I will know whether he be a thorn or a nettle.

XIII.

I will account no sin little; since there is not the least, but works out the death of the soul. It is all one, whether I be drowned in the ebber shore, or in the midst of the deep sea.

XIV.

It is a base thing, to get goods, to keep them. I see that God,

which only is infinitely rich, holdeth nothing in his own hands; but gives all to his creatures. But, if we will needs lay up; where should we rather repose it, than in Christ's treasury? The poor man's hand is the treasury of Christ. All my superfluity shall be there hoarded up, where I know it shall be safely kept, and surely returned me.

XV.

The School of God, and Nature, require two contrary manners of proceeding. In the School of Nature, we must conceive; and then believe: in the School of God, we must first believe; and then we shall conceive. He, that believes no more than he conceives, can never be a Christian; nor he a Philosopher, that assents without reason. In Nature's School, we are taught to bolt out the truth, by logical discourse: God cannot endure a logician. In his School, he is the best scholar, that reasons least, and assents most. In divine things, what I may, I will conceive: the rest I will believe and admire. Not a curious head, but a credulous and plain heart, is accepted with God.

XVI.

No worldly pleasure hath any absolute delight in it; but as a bee, having honey in the mouth, hath a sting in the tail. Why am I so foolish, to rest my heart upon any of them: and not rather labour to aspire to that one absolute good, in whom is nothing savouring of grief; nothing wanting to perfect happiness?

XVII.

A sharp reproof I account better, than a smooth deceit. Therefore, when my friend checks me, I will respect it with thankfulness: when others flatter me, I will suspect it; and rest in my own censure of myself, who should be more privy, and less partial, to my own deservings.

XVIII.

Extremity distinguisheth friends. Worldly pleasures, like physicians, give us over, when once we lie a dying; and yet the deathbed had most need of comforts: Christ Jesus standeth by his, in the pangs of death; and, after death, at the bar of judgment; not leaving them either in their bed or grave. I will use them, therefore, to my best advantage; not trust them. But for thee, O my Lord, which in mercy and truth canst not fail me, whom I have found ever faithful and present in all extremities, Kill me, yet will I trust in thee!

XIX.

We have heard of so many thousand generations passed, and we have seen so many hundreds die within our knowledge; that I wonder any man can make account to live, one day. I will die daily. It is not done before the time, which may be done at all times.

XX.

Desire ofttimes makes us unthankful: for whoso hopes for that he hath not, usually forgets that which he hath. I will not suffer

my heart to rove after high or impossible hopes; lest I should, in the mean time, contemn present benefits.

XXI.

In hoping well, in being ill, and fearing worse, the life of man is wholly consumed. When I am ill, I will live in hope of better; when well, in fear of worse: neither will I, at any time, hope without fear; lest I should deceive myself, with too much confidence; wherein, evil shall be so much more unwelcome and intolerable, because I looked for good: nor, again, fear without hope; lest I should be over-much dejected: nor, do either of them, without true contentation.

XXII.

What is man, to the whole earth? What is earth, to the heaven? What is heaven, to his Maker? I will admire nothing in itself; but all things in God, and God in all things.

XXIII.

There be three usual causes of ingratitude, upon a benefit received; Envy, Pride, Covetousness: Envy, looking more at others' benefits than our own; Pride, looking more at ourselves than the benefit; Covetousness, looking more at what we would have than what we have. In good turns, I will neither respect the giver, nor myself, nor the gift, nor others; but only the intent and good will, from whence it proceeded. So shall I requite others' great pleasures, with equal good-will; and accept of small favours, with great thankfulness.

XXIV.

Whereas the custom of the world is, to hate things present, to desire future, and magnify what is past; I will, contrarily, esteem that, which is present, best; for, both what is past was once present, and what is future will be present: future things, next; because they are present in hope: what is past, least of all; because it cannot be present; yet somewhat, because it was.

XXV.

We pity the folly of the lark, which, while it playeth with the feather and stoopeth to the glass, is caught in the fowler's net: and yet cannot see ourselves alike made fools, by Satan; who, deluding us by the vain feathers and glasses of the world, suddenly enwrappeth us in his snares. We see not the nets, indeed: it is too much, that we shall feel them; and that they are not so easily escaped after, as before avoided. *O Lord, keep thou mine eyes from beholding vanity.* And, though mine eyes see it, let not my heart stoop to it; but loath it afar off. And, if I stoop at any time, and be taken; set thou my soul at liberty: that I may say, *My soul is escaped, even as a bird out of the snare of the fowler: the snare is broken, and I am delivered.*

XXVI.

In suffering evil, to look to secondary causes, without respect to the Highest, maketh impatience: for so, we bite at the stone; and

neglect him, that threw it. If we take a blow at our equal, we return it with usury; if of a prince, we repine not. What matter is it, if God kill me, whether he do it by an ague, or by the hand of a tyrant? Again, in expectation of good, to look to the First Cause, without care of the second, argues idleness, and causeth want. As we cannot help ourselves, without God; so God will not ordinarily help us, without ourselves. In both, I will look up to God; without repining at the means in one, or trusting them in the other.

XXVII.

If my money were another man's, I could but keep it: only the expending shews it my own. It is greater glory, comfort, and gain, to lay it out well, than to keep it safely. God hath made me, not his Treasurer, but his Steward.

XXVIII.

Augustin's friend, Nebridius, not unjustly hated a short answer, to a weighty and difficult question; because the disquisition of great truths requires time, and the determining is perilous. I will as much hate a tedious and far-fetched answer, to a short and easy question. For, as that other wrongs the truth; so this, the hearer.

XXIX.

Performance is a binder. I will request no more favour of any man, than I must needs. I will rather choose to make an honest shift, than overmuch enthral myself, by being beholding.

XXX.

The world is a stage: every man an actor; and plays his part here, either in a Comedy or Tragedy. The good man is a Comedian; which, however he begins, ends merrily: but the wicked man acts a Tragedy; and therefore ever ends in horror. Thou seest a wicked man vaunt himself on his stage: stay till the last Act; and look to his end, as David did; and see, whether that be peace. Thou wouldest make strange Tragedies, if thou wouldest have but one Act. Who sees an ox, grazing in a fat and rank pasture, and thinks not that he is near to the slaughter? whereas, the lean beast, that toils under the yoke, is far enough from the shambles. The best wicked man cannot be so envied in his first shews, as he is pitiable in the conclusion.

XXXI.

Of all objects of beneficence, I will choose either an old man, or a child; because these are most out of hope to requite. The one forgets a good turn; the other lives not, to repay it.

XXXII.

That, which Pythagoras said of Philosophers, is more true of Christians; for, Christianity is nothing but a divine and better philosophy: Three sorts of men come to the market; buyers, sellers, lookers-on. The two first are both busy, and carefully distracted about their market: only the third live happily; using the world, as if they used it not.

XXXIII.

There be three things, which, of all other, I will never strive for; the wall, the way, the best seat. If I deserve well, a low place cannot disparage me so much, as I shall grace it: if not, the height of my place shall add to my shame; while every man shall condemn me of pride, matched with unworthiness.

XXXIV.

I see, there is not so much difference betwixt a man and a beast, as betwixt a Christian and a natural man. For, whereas man lives but one life of reason, above the beast; a Christian lives four lives, above a natural man: the life of inchoate regeneration, by grace; the perfect life of imputed righteousness; the life of glory begun, in the separation of the soul; the life of perfect glory, in the society of the body with the soul, in full happiness: the worst whereof is better by many degrees, than the best life of a natural man. For, whereas the dignity of the life is measured by the cause of it, (in which regard the life of the plant is basest; because it is but from the juice, arising from the root, administered by the earth: the life of the brute creature better than it; because it is sensitive: of a man better than it; because reasonable,) and the cause of this life is the Spirit of God; so far as the Spirit of God is above reason, so far doth a Christian exceed a mere naturalist. I thank God much, that he hath made me a man; but more, that he hath made me a Christian: without which, I know not whether it had been better for me, to have been a beast, or not to have been.

XXXV.

Great men's favours, friends' promises, and dead men's shoes, I will esteem; but not trust to.

XXXVI.

It is a fearful thing, to sin; more fearful, to delight in sin; yet worse, to defend it; but worse than worst, to boast of it. If, therefore, I cannot avoid sin; because I am a man: yet I will avoid the delight, defence, and boasting of sin; because I am a Christian.

XXXVII.

Those things, which are most eagerly desired, are most hardly both gotten and kept; God commonly crossing our desires, in what we are over-fervent. I will, therefore, account all things, as too good to have, so nothing too dear to lose.

XXXVIII.

A true friend is not born every day. It is best to be courteous to all; entire with few: so may we, perhaps, have less cause of joy; I am sure, less occasion of sorrow.

XXXIX.

Secrecies, as they are a burden to the mind, ere they be uttered; so are they no less charge to the receiver, when they are uttered. I will not long after more inward secrets; lest I should pro-

cure doubt to myself, and jealous fear to the discloser: but, as my mouth shall be shut with fidelity, not to blab them; so my ear shall not be too open to receive them.

XL.

As good physicians, by one receipt make way for another; so is it the safest course in practice: I will reveal a great secret to none, but whom I have found faithful in less.

XLI.

I will enjoy all things in God, and God in all things; nothing in itself: so shall my joys neither change, nor perish. For, however the things themselves may alter or fade: yet he, in whom they are mine, is ever like himself; constant, and everlasting.

XLII.

If I would provoke myself to contentation, I will cast down my eyes to my inferiors; and there see better men, in worse condition: if to humility, I will cast them up to my betters; and so much more deject myself to them, by how much more I see them thought worthy to be respected of others, and deserve better in themselves.

XLIII.

True virtue rests in the conscience of itself; either for reward, or censure. If, therefore, I know myself upright, false rumours shall not daunt me: if not answerable to the good report of my favourers, I will myself find the first fault; that I may prevent the shame of others.

XLIV.

I will account virtue the best riches, knowledge the next, riches the worst; and therefore will labour to be virtuous and learned, without condition: as for riches, if they fall in my way, I refuse them not; but if not, I desire them not.

XLV.

An honest word I account better, than a careless oath. I will say nothing, but what I dare swear, and will perform. It is a shame for a Christian, to abide his tongue a false servant, or his mind a loose mistress.

XLVI.

There is a just and easy difference, to be put betwixt a friend, and an enemy; betwixt a familiar, and a friend: and much good use to be made of all; but, of all, with discretion. I will disclose myself no whit, to my enemy; somewhat, to my friend; wholly, to no man: lest I should be more others', than mine own. Friendship is brittle stuff. How know I, whether he, that now loves me, may not hate me hereafter?

XLVII.

No man, but is an easy judge of his own matters: and lookers-on oftentimes see the more. I will, therefore, submit myself to others, in what I am reproved; but in what I am praised, only to myself.

XLVIII.

I will not be so merry, as to forget God; nor so sorrowful, as to forget myself.

XLIX.

As nothing makes so strong and mortal hostility, as discord in religions; so nothing in the world unites men's hearts so firmly, as the bond of faith. For, whereas there are three grounds of friendship; virtue, pleasure, profit; and, by all confessions, that is the surest, which is upon virtue: it must needs follow, that what is grounded on the best and most heavenly virtue, must be the safest: which, as it unites man to God so inseparably, that no temptations, no torments, not all the gates of hell can sever him; so it unites one Christian soul to another so firmly, that no outward occurrences, no imperfections in the party loved, can dissolve them. If I love not the child of God, for his own sake, for his Father's sake; more than my friend for my commodity, or my kinsman for blood; I never received any spark of true heavenly love.

L.

The good duty, that is deferred upon a conceit of present unfitness, at last grows irksome; and, thereupon, altogether neglected. I will not suffer my heart to entertain the least thought of lothness towards the task of devotion, wherewith I have stinted myself: but violently break through any motion of unwillingness, not without a deep check to myself, for my backwardness.

LI.

Hearing is a sense of great apprehension; yet far more subject to deceit, than seeing: not in the manner of apprehending; but in the uncertainty of the object. Words are vocal interpreters of the mind; actions real: and, therefore, however both should speak according to the truth of what is in the heart; yet words do more belie the heart, than actions. I care not what words I hear, when I see deeds. I am sure, what a man doth, he thinketh: not so always, what he speaketh. Though I will not be so severe a censor, that, for some few evil acts, I should condemn a man of false-heartedness; yet, in common course of life, I need not be so mopish, as not to believe rather the language of the hand, than of the tongue. He, that says well and doth well, is without exception commendable: but, if one of these must be severed from the other, I like him well that doth well, and saith nothing.

LII.

That, which they say of the pelican, That when the shepherds, in desire to catch her, lay fire not far from her nest; which she finding, and fearing the danger of her young, seeks to blow out with her wings, so long till she burn herself, and makes herself a prey in an unwise pity to her young: I see morally verified in experience, of those, which, indiscreetly meddling with the flame of dissension kindled in the Church, rather increase, than quench it; rather fire their own wings, than help others. I would rather be-

wail the fire afar off, than stir in the coals of it. I would not grudge my ashes to it, if those might abate the burning: but, since I see it is daily increased with partaking, I will behold it with sorrow; and meddle no otherwise, than by prayers to God, and entreaties to men; seeking my own safety and the peace of the Church, in the freedom of my thought and silence of my tongue.

LIII.

That, which is said of Lucilla's faction, That Anger bred it, Pride fostered it, and Covetousness confirmed it, is true of all schisms; though with some inversion. For, the most are bred through Pride; while men, upon a high conceit of themselves, scorn to go in the common road, and affect singularity in opinion: are confirmed through Anger; while they stomach and grudge any contradiction: and are nourished through Covetousness; while they seek ability to bear out their part. In some others, again, Covetousness obtains the first place; Anger, the second; Pride, the last. Herein, therefore, I have been always wont to commend and admire the humility of those great and profound wits, whom depth of knowledge hath not led to by-paths in judgment; but, walking in the beaten path of the Church, have bent all their forces to the establishment of received truths: accounting it greater glory, to confirm an ancient verity, than to devise a new opinion, though never so profitable, unknown to their predecessors. I will not reject a truth, for mere novelty; old truths may come newly to light; neither is God tied to times, for the gift of his illumination: but I will suspect a novel opinion, of untruth; and not entertain it, unless it may be deduced from ancient grounds.

LIV.

The ear and the eye are the mind's receivers; but the tongue is only busied, in expending the treasure received. If, therefore, the revenues of the mind be uttered as fast or faster than they are received, it cannot be, but that the mind must needs be held bare, and can never lay up for purchase: but, if the receivers take in still with no utterance, the mind may soon grow a burden to itself, and unprofitable to others. I will not lay up too much, and utter nothing; lest I be covetous: nor spend much, and store up little; lest I be prodigal and poor.

LV.

It is a vain-glorious flattery, for a man to praise himself; an envious wrong, to detract from others: I will speak no ill of others; no good of myself.

LVI.

That, which is the misery of travellers, to find many hosts and few friends, is the estate of Christians in their pilgrimage to a better life. Good friends may not, therefore, be easily forgone: neither must they be used as suits of apparel; which, when we have worn threadbare, we cast off, and call for new. Nothing, but death or villainy, shall divorce me from an old friend; but still I will fol-

low him so far, as is either possible or honest: and then, I will leave him, with sorrow.

LVII.

True friendship necessarily requires patience: for, there is no man, in whom I shall not mislike somewhat; and who shall not, as justly, mislike somewhat in me. My friends' faults, therefore, if little, I will swallow and digest; if great, I will smother them: however, I will wink at them, to others: but, lovingly notify them to himself.

LVIII.

Injuries hurt not more in the receiving, than in the remembrance. A small injury shall go as it comes: a great injury may dine or sup with me: but none at all shall lodge with me. Why should I vex myself, because another hath vexed me?

LIX.

It is good dealing with that, over which we have the most power. If my estate will not be framed to my mind, I will labour to frame my mind to my estate.

LX.

It is a great misery, to be either always or never alone: society of men hath not so much gain as distraction. In greatest company, I will be alone to myself: in greatest privacy, in company with God.

LXI.

Grief for things past that cannot be remedied, and care for things to come that cannot be prevented, may easily hurt, can never benefit me. I will, therefore, commit myself to God in both, and enjoy the present.

LXII.

Let my estate be never so mean, I will ever keep myself rather beneath; than either level, or above it. A man may rise, when he will, with honour; but cannot fall, without shame.

LXIII.

Nothing doth so befool a man, as extreme passion. This doth both make them fools, which otherwise are not; and shew them to be fools, that are so. Violent passions, if I cannot tame them, that they may yield, to my ease; I will at least smother them by concealment, that they may not appear, to my shame.

LXIV.

The mind of man, though infinite in desire, yet is finite in capacity. Since I cannot hope to know all things, I will labour first to know what I needs must, for their use; next, what I best may, for their convenience.

LXV.

Though time be precious to me, as all irrevocable good things deserve to be, and of all other things I would not be lavish of it; yet, I will account no time lost, that is either lent to or bestowed upon my friend.

LXVI.

The practices of the best men are more subject to error, than their speculations. I will honour good examples; but I will live by good precepts.

LXVII.

As charity requires forgetfulness of evil deeds, so patience requires forgetfulness of evil accidents. I will remember evils past, to humble me; not to vex me.

LXVIII.

It is both a misery and a shame, for a man to be a bankrupt in love; which he may easily pay, and be never the more impoverished. I will be in no man's debt, for good will: but will, at least, return every man his own measure; if not with usury. It is much better to be a creditor, than a debtor, in any thing; but especially of this: yet of this I will so be content to be a debtor, that I will always be paying it, where I owe it; and yet never will have so paid it, that I shall not owe it more.

LXIX.

The Spanish proverb is too true; "Dead men and absent find no friends." All mouths are boldly opened, with a conceit of impunity. My ear shall be no grave, to bury my friend's good name. But, as I will be my present friend's self: so will I be my absent friend's deputy; to say for him, what he would, and cannot, speak for himself.

LXX.

The loss of my friend, as it shall moderately grieve me; so it shall, another way, much benefit me, in recompence of his want: for it shall make me think more often and seriously, of earth and of heaven: of earth; for his body, which is reposed in it: of heaven; for his soul, which possesseth it before me: of earth; to put me in mind of my like frailty and mortality: of heaven; to make me desire, and, after a sort, emulate his happiness and glory.

LXXI.

Variety of objects is wont to cause distraction: when, again, a little one, laid close to the eye, if but of a penny breadth, wholly takes up the sight; which could else see the whole half heaven at once. I will have the eyes of my mind ever forestalled and filled with these two objects; the shortness of my life, eternity after death.

LXXII.

I see that he is more happy, that hath nothing to lose; than he, that loseth that which he hath. I will, therefore, neither hope for riches, nor fear poverty.

LXXIII.

I care not so much in any thing, for multitude, as for choice. Books and friends I will not have many: I would rather seriously converse with a few, than wander amongst many.

LXXIV.

The wicked man is a very coward; and is afraid of every thing:

of God; because he is his enemy: of Satan; because he is his tormentor: of God's creatures; because they, joining with their Maker, fight against him: of himself; because he bears, about him, his own accuser and executioner. The godly man, contrarily, is afraid of nothing: not of God; because he knows him his best friend, and therefore will not hurt him: not of Satan; because he cannot hurt him: not of afflictions; because he knows they proceed from a loving God, and end to his own good: not of the creatures; since the very stones of the field are in league with him: not of himself; since his conscience is at peace. A wicked man may be secure, because he knows not what he hath to fear; or desperate, through extremity of fear: but, truly courageous he cannot be. Faithlessness cannot choose but be false-hearted. I will ever, by my courage, take trial of my faith: by how much more I fear, by so much less I believe.

LXXV.

The godly man lives hardly; and, like the ant, toils here, during the summer of his peace; holding himself short of his pleasures, as looking to provide for a hard winter; which, when it comes, he is able to wear it out comfortably: whereas the wicked man doth prodigally lash out all his joys, in the time of his prosperity; and, like the grasshopper, singing merrily all summer, is starved in winter. I will so enjoy the present, that I will lay up more for hereafter.

LXXVI.

I have wondered oft, and blushed for shame, to read in mere philosophers, which had no other mistress but nature, such strange resolution, in the contempt of both fortunes, as they call them; such notable precepts for a constant settledness and tranquillity of mind: and to compare it with my own disposition, and practice; whom I have found too much drooping and dejected under small crosses, and easily again carried away with little prosperity: To see such courage and strength to contemn death, in those, which thought they wholly perished in death; and to find such faint-heartedness in myself, at the first conceit of death, who yet am thoroughly persuaded of the future happiness of my soul. I have the benefit of nature, as well as they; besides infinite more helps, that they wanted. Oh the dulness and blindness of us unworthy Christians, that suffer Heathens, by the dim candle-light of Nature, to go further than we by the clear sun of the Gospel; that an indifferent man could not tell by our practice, whether were the Pagan! Let me never, for shame, account myself a Christian, unless my Art of Christianity have imitated and gone beyond Nature, so far, that I can find the best Heathen as far below me in true resolution, as the vulgar sort were below them. Else, I may shame religion: it can neither honest nor help me.

LXXVII.

If I would be irreligious and unconscionable, I would make no doubt to be rich: for, if a man will defraud, dissemble, forswear, bribe, oppress, serve the time, make use of all men for his own

turn, make no scruple of any wicked action for his advantage; I cannot see, how he can escape wealth and preferment: but, for an upright man to rise, is difficult; while his conscience straitly curbs him in from every unjust action, and will not allow him to advance himself by indirect means. So, riches come seldom easily, to a good man; seldom hardly, to the conscienceless. Happy is that man, that can be rich with truth, or poor with contentment. I will not envy the gravel, in the unjust man's throat. Of riches, let me never have more, than an honest man can bear away.

LXXVIII.

God is the God of order; not of confusion. As, therefore, in natural things, he useth to proceed from one extreme to another, by degrees, through the mean; so doth he, in spiritual. The sun riseth not at once to his highest, from the darkness of midnight; but first sends forth some feeble glimmering of light, in the dawning: then, looks out with weak and waterish beams; and so, by degrees, ascends to the midst of heaven. So, in the seasons of the year, we are not one day scorched with a summer heat; and, on the next, frozen with a sudden extremity of cold: but winter comes on softly; first by cold dews, then hoar frosts; until at last it descend to the hardest weather of all. Such are God's spiritual proceedings. He never brings any man from the estate of sin to the estate of glory, but through the state of grace. And, as for grace, he seldom brings a man from gross wickedness to any eminence of perfection. I will be charitably jealous of those men, which, from notorious lewdness, leap at once into a sudden forwardness of profession. Holiness doth not, like Jonah's gourd, grow up in a night. I like it better, to go on, soft and sure; than, for a hasty fit, to run myself out of wind; and, after, stand still and breathe me.

LXXIX.

It hath been said of old, "To do well and hear ill, is princely." Which as it is most true, by reason of the envy which follows upon justice; so is the contrary no less justified, by many experiments. To do ill and to hear well, is the fashion of many great men: to do ill, because they are borne out with the assurance of impunity; to hear well, because of abundance of parasites, which, as ravens to a carcase, gather about great men. Neither is there any so great misery in greatness as this, that it conceals men from themselves; and, when they will needs have a sight of their own actions, it shews them a false glass to look in. Meanness of state, that I can find, hath none so great inconvenience. I am no whit sorry, that I am rather subject to contempt, than flattery.

LXXX.

There is no earthly blessing so precious, as health of body; without which, all other worldly good things are but troublesome. Neither is there any thing more difficult, than to have a good soul, in a strong and vigorous body; for, it is commonly seen, that the worse part draws away the better: but, to have a healthful and

sound soul in a weak sickly body, is no novelty; while the weakness of the body is a help to the soul; playing the part of a perpetual monitor, to incite it to good and check it for evil. I will not be over-glad of health, nor over-fearful of sickness. I will more fear the spiritual hurt, that may follow upon health; than the bodily pain, that accompanies sickness.

LXXXI.

There is nothing more troublesome to a good mind, than to do nothing: for, besides the furtherance of our estate, the mind doth both delight and better itself with exercise. There is but this difference, then, betwixt labour and idleness; that labour is a profitable and pleasant trouble; idleness, a trouble both unprofitable and comfortless. I will be ever doing something; that either God when he cometh, or Satan when he tempteth, may find me busied. And yet, since, as the old proverb is, "Better it is to be idle than effect nothing;" I will not more hate doing nothing, than doing something to no purpose. I shall do good, but a while: let me strive to do it, while I may.

LXXXII.

A faithful man hath three eyes: the first, of Sense, common to him with brute creatures; the second, of Reason, common to all men; the third, of Faith, proper to his profession: whereof each looketh beyond other; and none of them meddleth with others' objects. For, neither doth the eye of Sense reach to intelligible things, and matters of discourse; nor the eye of Reason to those things, which are supernatural and spiritual; neither doth Faith look down to things, that may be sensibly seen. If thou discourse to a brute beast of the depths of philosophy, never so plainly, he understands not; because they are beyond the view of his eye, which is only of sense: if to a mere carnal man, of divine things; he perceiveth not the things of God, neither indeed can do; because they are spiritually discerned; and, therefore, no wonder, if those things seem unlikely, incredible, impossible to him, which the faithful man, having a proportionable means of apprehension, doth as plainly see, as his eye doth any sensible thing. Tell a plain countryman, that the sun, or some higher or lesser star, is much bigger than his cartwheel; or, at least so many scores bigger than the whole earth; he laughs thee to scorn, as affecting admiration, with a learned untruth. Yet the scholar, by the eye of reason, doth as plainly see and acknowledge this truth, as that his hand is bigger than his pen. What a thick mist, yea what a palpable and more than Egyptian darkness, doth the natural man live in! What a world is there, that he doth not see at all! and how little doth he see in this, which is his proper element! There is no bodily thing, but the brute creatures see as well as he; and some of them better. As for his eye of reason, how dim is it in those things, which are best fitted to it! What one thing is there in nature, which he doth perfectly know? what herb, or flower, or worm that he treads on, is there, whose true essence he knoweth? No

not so much, as what is in his own bosom; what it is, where it is, or whence it is, that gives being to himself. But, for those things which concern the best world, he doth not so much as confusedly see them; neither knoweth whether they be. He sees no whit into the great and awful Majesty of God. He discerns him not in all his creatures, filling the world with his infinite and glorious presence. He sees not his wise providence, overruling all things, disposing all casual events, ordering all sinful actions of men to his own glory. He comprehends nothing of the beauty, majesty, power, and mercy of the Saviour of the World, sitting in his Humanity at his Father's right-hand. He sees not the unspeakable happiness of the glorified souls of the saints. He sees not the whole heavenly commonwealth of angels; ascending and descending to the behoof of God's children; waiting upon him at all times invisibly; not excluded with closeness of prisons nor desolateness of wildernesses: and the multitude of evil spirits, passing and standing by him, to tempt him unto evil: But, like unto the foolish bird, when he hath hid his head that he sees no body, he thinks himself altogether unseen; and then counts himself solitary, when his eye can meet with no companion. It was not without cause, that we call a mere fool a Natural: for, however worldlings have still thought Christians God's fools, we know them the fools of the world. The deepest philosopher that ever was, saving the reverence of the Schools, is but an ignorant sot, to the simplest Christian: for, the weakest Christian may, by plain information, see somewhat into the greatest mysteries of nature, because he hath the eye of reason common with the best; but the best Philosopher, by all the demonstration in the world, can conceive nothing of the mysteries of Godliness, because he utterly wants the eye of faith. Though my insight into matters of the world be so shallow, that my simplicity moveth pity, or maketh sport unto others; it shall be my contentment and happiness, that I see further into better matters. That, which I see not, is worthless; and deserves little better than contempt: that, which I see, is unspeakable, inestimable, for comfort, for glory.

LXXXIII.

It is not possible, for an inferior to live at peace, unless he have learned to be contemned: for, the pride of his superiors, and the malice of his equals and inferiors, shall offer him continual and inevitable occasions of unquietness. As contentation is the mother of inward peace with ourselves; so is humility the mother of peace with others: for, if thou be vile in thine own eyes first, it shall the less trouble thee to be accounted vile of others. So that a man of a high heart, in a low place, cannot want discontentment; whereas a man of lowly stomach can swallow and digest contempt, without any distemper: for, wherein can he be the worse for being contemned, who, out of his own knowledge of his deserts, did most of all contemn himself? I should be very improvident, if, in this calling, I did not look for daily contempt;

wherein *we are made a spectacle to the world, to angels, and men.* When it comes, I will either embrace it, or contemn it: embrace it, when it is within my measure; when above, contemn it: so embrace it, that I may more humble myself under it; and so contemn it, that I may not give heart to him that offers it, nor disgrace him for whose cause I am contemned.

LXXXIV.

Christ raised three dead men to life: one, newly departed; another, on the bier; a third, smelling in the grave: to shew us, that no degree of death is so desperate, that it is past help. My sins are many and great: yet, if they were more, they are far below the mercy of him that hath remitted them, and the value of his ransom that hath paid for them. A man hurts himself most by presumption: but we cannot do God a greater wrong, than to despair of forgiveness. It is a double injury to God; first, that we offend his justice by sinning; then, that we wrong his mercy with despairing.

LXXXV.

For a man to be weary of the world through miseries that he meets with, and for that cause to covet death, is neither difficult, nor commendable; but rather argues a base weakness of mind. So it may be a cowardly part, to contemn the utmost of all terrible things, in a fear of lingering misery: but, for a man, either living happily here on earth, or resolving to live miserably, yet to desire his removal to heaven, doth well become a true Christian courage, and argues a notable mixture of patience and faith: of patience, for that he can and dare abide to live sorrowfully; of faith, for that he is assured of his better being otherwhere, and therefore prefers the absent joys he looks for, to those he feels in present. No sorrow shall make me wish myself dead, that I may not be at all: no contentment shall hinder me from wishing myself with Christ, that I may be happier.

LXXXVI.

It was not for nothing, that the wise Creator of all things hath placed gold, and silver, and all precious minerals under our feet, to be trod upon; and hath hid them low in the bowels of the earth, that they cannot without great labour be either found, or gotten: whereas he hath placed the noblest part of his creation above our heads; and that so open to our view, that we cannot choose but every moment behold them. Wherein what did he else intend, but to draw away our minds from these worthless and yet hidden treasures, to which he foresaw we would be too much addicted; and to call them to the contemplation of those better things, which, beside their beauty, are more oblivious to us; that in them we might see and admire the glory of their Maker, and withal seek our own? How do those men wrong themselves and misconstrue God, who, as if he had hidden these things because he would have them sought and laid the other open for neglect, bend themselves wholly to the seeking of these earthly commodities;

and do no more mind heaven, than if there were none! If we could imagine a beast to have reason, how could he be more absurd in his choice? How easy is it to observe, that still, the higher we go, the more purity and perfection we find! (So earth is the very dross and dregs of all the elements: water somewhat more pure than it; yet also more feculent than the air above it: the lower air less pure than his uppermost regions; and yet they as far inferior, to the lowest heavens: which again are more exceeded by the glorious and empyreal seat of God, which is the heaven of the just): yet these brutish men take up their rest, and place their felicity, in the lowest and worst of all God's workmanship; not regarding that, which, with its own glory, can make them happy. Heaven is the proper place of my soul: I will send it up thither continually in my thoughts, while it sojourns with me, before it go to dwell there for ever.

LXXXVII.

A man need not to care for more knowledge, than to know himself: he needs no more pleasure, than to content himself; no more victory, than to overcome himself; no more riches, than to enjoy himself. What fools are they, that seek to know all other things, and are strangers in themselves! that seek altogether to satisfy others' humours, with their own displeasure! that seek to vanquish kingdoms and countries, when they are not masters of themselves! that have no hold of their own hearts; yet seek to be possessed of all outward commodities! Go home to thyself, first, vain heart: and, when thou hast made sure work there, in knowing, contenting, overcoming, enjoying thyself, spend all the superfluity of thy time and labour upon others.

LXXXVIII.

It was an excellent rule that fell from Epicure (whose name is odious to us, for the father of looseness;) That if a man would be rich, honourable, aged, he should not strive so much to add to his wealth, reputation, years, as to detract from his desires. For, certainly, in these things, which stand most upon conceit, he hath the most, that desireth least. A poor man, that hath little and desires no more, is, in truth, richer than the greatest monarch; that thinks he hath not what he should, or what he might; or that grieves there is no more to have. It is not necessity, but ambition, that sets men's hearts on the rack. If I have meat, drink, apparel, I will learn therewith to be content. If I had the world full of wealth beside, I could enjoy no more than I use: the rest could please me no otherwise, but by looking on. And why can I not thus solace myself, while it is others'?

LXXXIX.

An inconstant and wavering mind, as it makes a man unfit for society (for that there can be no assurance of his words or purposes; neither can we build on them, without deceit): so, besides that it makes a man ridiculous, it hinders him from ever attaining

any perfection in himself (for a rolling stone gathers no moss; and the mind, whilst it would be every thing, proves nothing. Oft changes cannot be without loss): yea, it keeps him from enjoying that, which he hath attained. For, it keeps him ever in work: building, pulling down, selling, changing, buying, commanding, forbidding. So, while he can be no other man's friend, he is the least his own. It is the safest course for a man's profit, credit, and ease, to deliberate long, to resolve surely; hardly to alter; not to enter upon that whose end he foresees not answerable; and, when he is once entered, not to surcease till he have attained the end he foresaw. So may he, to good purpose, begin a new work, when he hath well finished the old.

XC.

The way to heaven is like that, which Jonathan and his armour-bearer passed, betwixt two rocks; one Bozez, the other Seneh; that is foul, and thorny: whereto we must make shift to climb, on our hands and knees; but, when we are come up, there is victory and triumph. God's children have three suits of apparel; whereof two are worn daily on earth, the third laid up for them in the wardrobe of heaven: they are ever either in black, mourning; in red, persecuted; or in white, glorious. Any way shall be pleasant to me, that leads unto such an end. It matters not, what rags or what colours I wear with men; so I may walk with my Saviour in white, and reign with him in glory.

XCI.

There is nothing more easy, than to say divinity by rote; and to discourse of spiritual matters from the tongue or pen of others: but to hear God speak it to the soul, and to feel the power of religion in ourselves, and to express it out of the truth of experience within, is both rare and hard. All, that we feel not in the matters of God, is but hypocrisy; and, therefore, the more we profess, the more we sin. It will never be well with me, till, in these greatest things, I be careless of others' censures, fearful only of God's and my own; till sound experience have really catechized my heart, and made me know God and my Saviour otherwise than by words. I will never be quiet, till I can see, and feel, and taste God: my hearing I will account as only serving to effect this, and my speech only to express it.

XCII.

There is no enemy can hurt us, but by our own hands. Satan could not hurt us, if our own corruption betrayed us not: afflictions cannot hurt us, without our own impatience: temptations cannot hurt us, without our own yieldance: death could not hurt us, without the sting of our own sins: sin could not hurt us, without our own impenitence: How might I defy all things, if I could obtain not to be my own enemy! I love myself too much, and yet not enough. O God, teach me to wish myself but so well as thou wishest me, and I am safe.

XCIII.

It grieves me to see all other creatures so officious to their Maker, in their kind: that both winds, and sea, and heaven, and earth obey him, with all readiness: that each of these hears other, and all of them their Creator; though to the destruction of themselves: and man only is rebellious; imitating herein the evil spirits, who, in the receipt of a more excellent kind of reason, are yet more perverse. Hence it is, that the prophets are ofttimes fain to turn their speech to the earth, void of all sense and life; from this living earth, informed with reason: that only, which should make us more pliable, stiffeneth us. God could force us, if he pleased; but he would rather incline us by gentleness. I must stoop to his power, why do I not stoop to his will? It is a vain thing to resist his voice, whose hand we cannot resist.

XCIV.

As all natural bodies are mixed; so must all our moral dispositions. No simple passion doth well. If our joy be not allayed with sorrow, it is madness; and if our sorrow be not tempered with some mixture of joy, it is hellish and desperate. If, in these earthly things, we hope without all doubt, or fear without all hope, we offend on both sides; if we labour without all recreation, we grow dull and heartless; if we sport ourselves without all labour, we grow wild and unprofitable. These compositions are wholesome, as for the body, so for the mind; which, though it be not of a compounded substance as the body, yet hath much variety of qualities and affections, and those contrary to each other. I care not how simple my heavenly affections are; which, the more free they are from composition, are the nearer to God: nor how compounded my earthly; which are easily subject to extremities. If joy come alone, I will ask him for his fellow; and evermore, in spite of him, couple him with his contrary: that so, while each are enemies to other, both may be friends to me.

XCV.

Joy and sorrow are hard to conceal; as from the countenance, so from the tongue. There is so much correspondence betwixt the heart and tongue, that they will move at once: every man, therefore, speaks of his own pleasure and care; the hunter and falconer, of his games; the ploughman, of his team; the soldier, of his march and colours. If the heart were as full of God, the tongue could not refrain to talk of him: the rareness of Christian communication argues the common poverty of grace. If Christ be not in our hearts, we are godless: if he be there without our joy, we are senseless: if we rejoice in him and speak not of him, we are shamefully unthankful. Every man taketh, yea raiseth occasion, to bring in speech of what he liketh. As I will think of thee always, O Lord; so it shall be my joy, to speak of thee often: and, if I find not opportunity, I will make it.

XCVI.

When I see my Saviour hanging in so forlorn a fashion upon the Cross: his head drooping down; his temples bleeding with thorns, his hands and feet with the nails, and his side with the spear; his enemies round about him, mocking at his shame, and insulting over his impotence: how should I think any otherwise of him, than, as himself complaineth, forsaken of his Father? But, when again I turn mine eyes, and see the sun darkened, the earth quaking, the rocks rent, the graves opened, the thief confessing, to give witness to his Deity; and when I see so strong a guard of Providence over him, that all his malicious enemies are not able so much as to break one bone of that body, which seemed carelessly neglected: I cannot but wonder at his glory and safety. God is ever near, though oft unseen; and, if he wink at our distress, he sleepeth not. The sense of others must not be judges of his presence and care; but our faith. What care I, if the world give me up for miserable, while I am under his secret protection? O Lord, since thou art strong in our weakness, and present in our senselessness; give me but as much comfort in my sorrow, as thou givest me security, and at my worst I shall be well.

XCVII.

In sins, and afflictions, our course must be contrary: we must begin to detest the greatest sin first, and descend to the hatred of the least; we must first begin to suffer small afflictions with patience, that we may ascend to the endurance of the greatest: then alone shall I be happy, when, by this holy method, I have drawn my soul to make conscience of the least evil of sin, and not to shrink at the greatest evil of affliction.

XCVIII.

Prescription is no plea against the king: much less can long custom plead for error, against that our Supreme Lord, to whom a thousand years are but as yesterday. Yea, Time, which pleads voluntarily for continuance of things lawful, will take no fee, not to speak against an evil use. Hath an ill custom lasted long? It is more than time it were abrogated: age is an aggravation to sin. Heresy or abuse, if it be grey-headed, deserves sharper opposition. To say "I will do ill because I have done so," is perilous and impious presumption. Continuance can no more make any wickedness safe, than the author of sin, no devil. If I have once sinned, it is too much: if oft, woe be to me; if the iteration of my offence cause boldness, and not rather more sorrow, more detestation: woe be to me and my sin, if I be not the better because I have sinned.

XCIX.

It is strange to see the varieties and proportion of spiritual and bodily diets. There be some creatures, that are fatted and delighted with poisons: others live by nothing but air; and some, they say, by fire: others will taste no water, but muddy: others

feed on their fellows, or perhaps on part of themselves; others, on the excretions of nobler creatures: some search into the earth for sustenance, or dive into the waters; others content themselves with what the upper earth yields them, without violence. All these, and more, are answered in the palate of the soul: there be some, yea the most, to whom sin, which is of a most venomous nature, is both food and dainties; others, that think it the only life, to feed on the popular air of applause; others, that are never well out of the fire of contentions, and that wilfully trouble all waters with their private humours and opinions; others, whose cruelty delights in oppression and blood, yea whose envy gnaws upon their own hearts; others, that take pleasure to revive the wicked and foul heresies of the greater wits of the former times; others, whose worldly minds root altogether in earthly cares, or who not content with the ordinary provision of doctrine affect obscure subtleties unknown to wiser men; others, whose too indifferent minds feed on whatever opinion comes next to hand, without any careful disquisition of truth: so, some feed foul; others, but few, clean and wholesome. As there is no beast upon earth, which hath not his like in the sea, and which perhaps is not in some sort paralleled in the plants of the earth; so there is no bestial disposition, which is not answerably found in some men: mankind, therefore, hath within itself his Goats, Chameleons, Salamanders, Camels, Wolves, Dogs, Swine, Moles, and whatever sorts of beasts: there are but a few men, amongst men. To a wise man, the shape is not so much as the qualities. If I be not a man within; in my choices, affections, inclinations; it had been better for me to have been a beast without: a beast is but like itself; but an evil man is half a beast, and half a devil.

C.

Forced favours are thankless; and, commonly, with noble minds find no acceptation. For a man to give his soul to God, when he sees he can no longer hold it; or to bestow his goods, when he is forced to part with them; or to forsake his sin, when he cannot follow it; are but unkind and cold obediences. God sees our necessity, and scorns our compelled offers. What man of any generous spirit will abide himself made the last refuge of a craved, denied, and constrained courtesy? While God gives me leave to keep my soul, yet then to bequeath it to him; and, while strength and opportunity serve me to sin, then to forsake it; is both accepted and crowned: God loves neither grudged nor necessary gifts: I will offer betimes, that he may vouchsafe to take: I will give him the best, that he may take all.

O God, give me this grace, that I may give thee myself, freely and seasonably: and then I know thou canst not but accept me, because this gift is thine own.

THE THIRD CENTURY
OF
MEDITATIONS AND VOWS;
DIVINE AND MORAL.

TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL

SIR EDMUND BACON, KNIGHT,

INCREASE OF HONOUR, STRENGTH OF BODY, PERFECTION OF VIRTUE.

SIR:

THERE is no wise man would give his thoughts for all the world: which, as they are the most pleasing and noble business of man, being the natural and immediate issue of that reason whereby he is severed from brute creatures; so they are, in their use, most beneficial to ourselves and others. For, by the means hereof, we enjoy both God and ourselves; and hereby we make others partners of those rich excellencies, which God hath hid in the mind. And, though it be most easy and safe for a man, with the Psalmist, to commune with his own heart in silence; yet is it more behoveful to the common good, for which, both as Men and Christians, we are ordained, that those thoughts, which our experience hath found comfortable and fruitful to ourselves, should, with neglect of all censures, be communicated to others. The concealment whereof, methinks, can proceed from no other ground, but either timorousness or envy. Which consideration hath induced me to clothe these naked thoughts, in plain and simple words; and to adventure them into the light, after their fellows: consecrating them the rather to your name, for that, besides all other respects of duty, they are part of those Meditations, which, in my late peregrination with you, took me up under the solitary hills of Ardenna, wanting as then the opportunity of their employment. I offer them to you, not for that yourself are not stored with choice of better; but as poor men use to bring presents to the rich. If they may carry acceptation from you and bring profit unto any soul, it shall abundantly satisfy me: who should think it honour enough, if I might be vouchsafed to bring but one pin towards the decking of the Spouse of Christ; while others, out of their abundance, adorn her with costly robes and rich medals. I commend their success, to God; their patronage, to you; their use, to the world. That God multiply his rare favours upon you, and your worthy Lady; and go you on to favour

Your Worship's humble devoted,

JOSEPH HALL.

MEDITATIONS AND VOWS.

I.

Good men are placed by God, as so many stars in the lower firmament of the world. As they must imitate those heavenly bodies, in their light and influence; so also in their motion: and, therefore, as the planets have a course proper to themselves, against the sway of the heaven that carries them about; so must each good man have a motion out of his own judgment, contrary to the customs and opinions of the vulgar; finishing his own course with the least shew of resistance. I will never affect singularity, except it be among those that are vicious. It is better to do or think well alone, than to follow a multitude in evil.

II.

What strange variety of actions doth the eye of God see, at once, round about the compass of the earth, and within it! Some, building houses; some, delving for metals; some, marching in troops, or encamping one against another; some, bargaining in the market; some, travelling on their way; some, praying in their closets; others, quaffing at the tavern; some, rowing in the gallies; others, dallying in their chambers: and, in short, as many different actions as persons; yet all have one common intention of good to themselves; true, in some, but, in the most, imaginary. The glorified spirits have but one uniform work, wherein they all join; the praise of their Creator. This is one difference betwixt the saints above, and below: they above are free both from business and distraction; these below are free, though not absolutely, from distraction, not at all from business. Paul could think of the cloak that he left at Troas, and of the shaping of his skins for his tents; yet, through these, he looked still at heaven. This world is made for business. My actions must vary, according to occasions. My end shall be but one; and the same now on earth, that it must be one day in heaven.

III.

To see how the Martyrs of God died, and the life of their persecutors, would make a man out of love with life, and out of all fear of death. They were flesh and blood, as well as we: life was as sweet to them, as to us: their bodies were as sensible of pain, as ours: we go to the same heaven with them. How comes it then, that they were so courageous, in abiding such torments in their death, as the very mention strikes horror into any reader; and we are so cowardly, in encountering a fair and natural death? If this valour had been of themselves, I would never have looked after them in hope of imitation: now, I know it was he, for whom they

suffered and that suffered in them, which sustained them. They were of themselves as weak as I; and God can be as strong in me, as he was in them. O Lord, thou art not more unable to give me this grace; but I am more unworthy to receive it: and yet thou regardest not worthiness, but mercy. Give me their strength, and what end thou wilt.

IV.

Our first age is all in hope. When we are in the womb, who knows whether we shall have our right shape and proportion of body; being neither monstrous nor deformed? When we are born, who knows whether, with the due features of a man, we shall have the faculties of reason and understanding? When yet our progress in years discovereth wit or folly, who knows whether, with the power of reason, we shall have the grace of faith to be Christians? and, when we begin to profess well, whether it be a temporary and seeming, or a true and saving faith? Our middle age is half in hope, for the future; and half in proof, for that is past: our old age is out of hope; and altogether in proof. In our last times, therefore, we know, both what we have been, and what to expect. It is good for youth to look forward, and still to propound the best things unto itself; for an old man to look backward, and to repent him of that wherein he hath failed, and to recollect himself for the present: but, in my middle age, I will look both backward and forward; comparing my hopes with my proof; redeeming the time, ere it be all spent, that my recovery may prevent my repentance. It is both a folly and misery to say, "This I might have done."

V.

It is the wonderful mercy of God, both to forgive us our debts to him in our sins, and to make himself a debtor to us in his promises: so that now, both ways, the soul may be sure; since he neither calleth for those debts which he hath once forgiven, nor withdraweth those favours and that heaven which he hath promised: but, as he is a merciful creditor to forgive, so he is a true debtor to pay whatsoever he hath undertaken. Whence it is come to pass, that the penitent sinner owes nothing to God, but love and obedience; and God owes still much and all to him: for he owes as much as he hath promised; and what he owes, by virtue of his blessed promise, we may challenge. O infinite mercy! He, that lent us all that we have, and in whose debt-books we run hourly forward till the sum be endless; yet owes us more, and bids us look for payment. I cannot deserve the least favour he can give; yet will I as confidently challenge the greatest, as if I deserved it. Promise indebteth no less, than loan or desert.

VI.

It is no small commendation, to manage a little well. He is a good waggoner, that can turn in a narrow room. To live well in abundance, is the praise of the estate, not of the person. I will

study more, how to give a good account of my little, than how to make it more.

VII.

Many Christians do greatly wrong themselves, with a dull and heavy kind of sullenness; who, not suffering themselves to delight in any worldly thing, are thereupon oftimes so heartless, that they delight in nothing. These men, like to careless guests, when they are invited to an excellent banquet, lose their dainties, for want of a stomach; and lose their stomach, for want of exercise. A good conscience keeps always good cheer: he cannot chuse but fare well, that hath it; unless he lose his appetite, with neglect and slothfulness. It is a shame for us Christians, not to find as much joy in God, as worldlings do in their forced merriments, and lewd wretches in the practice of their sins.

VIII.

A wise Christian hath no enemies. Many hate and wrong him; but he loves all, and all pleasure him. Those, that profess love to him, pleasure him with the comfort of their society, and the mutual reflection of friendship: those, that profess hatred, make him more wary of his ways; shew him faults in himself, which his friends would either not have espied or not censured; send him the more willingly to seek favour above: and, as the worst do bestead him, though against their wills; so he again doth voluntarily good to them. To do evil for evil, as Joab to Abner, is a sinful weakness: to do good for good, as Ahasuerus to Mordecai, is but natural justice: to do evil for good, as Judas to Christ, is unthankfulness and villainy: only to do good for evil, agrees with Christian profession. And what greater work of friendship, than to do good? If men will not be my friends in love, I will perforce make them my friends in a good use of their hatred. I will be their friend, that are mine, and would not be.

IX.

All temporal things are troublesome: for, if we have good things, it is a trouble to forego them; and, when we see they must be parted from, either we wish they had not been so good, or that we never had enjoyed them. Yea, it is more trouble to lose them, than it was before joy to possess them. If, contrarily, we have evil things, their very presence is troublesome; and still we wish that they were good, or that we were disburdened of them. So, good things are troublesome, in event; evil things, in their use: they, in the future; these, in the present: they, because they shall come to an end; these, because they do continue. Tell me, thy wife or thy child lies dying, and now makes up a loving and dutiful life with a kind and loving parture; whether wouldst thou rather for thy own part, she had been so good or worse? would it have cost thee so many hearty sighs and tears, if she had been perverse and disobedient? Yet, if in her life-time I put thee to this choice, thou thinkest it no choice at all, in such inequality. It is more torment, sayest thou, to live one unquiet month, than it

is pleasure to live an age in love. Or, if thy life be yet dearer: thou hast lived to grey hairs; not hastened with care, but bred with late succession of years: thy table was ever covered with variety of dishes: thy back softly and richly clad: thou never gavest denial to either skin or stomach: thou ever favouredst thyself; and health, thee. Now death is at thy threshold, and unpartially knocks at thy door; dost thou not wish thou hadst lived with crusts, and been clothed with rags? Wouldst not thou have given a better welcome to death, if he had found thee lying upon a pallet of straw, and supping of water-gruel; after many painful nights, and many sides changed in vain? Yet this beggarly estate thou detestest in health, and pitiest in others, as truly miserable. The sum is; A beggar wisheth he might be a monarch, while he lives; and the great potentate wisheth he had lived a beggar, when he comes to die: and, if beggary be to have nothing, he shall be so in death, though he wished it not. Nothing therefore but eternity can make a man truly happy; as nothing can make perfect misery but eternity: for, as temporal good things afflict us in their ending, so temporal sorrows afford us joy in the hope of their end. What folly is this in us, to seek for our trouble, to neglect our happiness! I can be but well; and this, That I was well, shall one day be grievous. Nothing shall please me, but that once I shall be happy for ever.

X.

The eldest of our forefathers lived not so much as a day to God, to whom a thousand years is as no more: we live but as an hour to the day of our forefathers; for, if nine hundred and sixty were but their day, our fourscore is but as the twelfth part of it. And yet, of this our hour we live scarce a minute to God: for, take away all that time, that is consumed in sleeping, dressing, feeding, talking, sporting; of that little time, there can remain not much more than nothing: yet the most seek pastimes to hasten it. Those, which seek to mend the pace of Time, spur a running horse. I had more need to redeem it, with double care and labour; than to seek how to sell it, for nothing.

XI.

Each day is a new life, and an abridgment of the whole. I will so live, as if I counted every day my first, and my last; as if I began to live but then, and should live no more afterwards.

XII.

It was not in vain, that the ancient founders of languages used the same word in many tongues, to signify both Honour and Charge; meaning therein, to teach us the inseparable connection of these two. For there scarce ever was any charge, without some opinion of honour; neither ever was there honour, without a charge: which two, as they are not without reason joined together in name, by human institution; so they are most wisely coupled together by God, in the disposition of these worldly estates. Charge, without honour to make it amends, would be too toilsome;

and must needs discourage and over-lay a man: Honour, without charge, would be too pleasant; and, therefore, both would be too much sought after, and must needs carry away the mind in the enjoying it. Now, many dare not be ambitious, because of the burden; chusing rather to live obscurely and securely: and yet, on the other side, those, that are under it, are refreshed in the Charge with the sweetness of Honour. Seeing they cannot be separated, it is not the worst estate to want both. They, whom thou enviest for honour, perhaps envy thee more for thy quietness.

XIII.

He, that taketh his own cares upon himself, loads himself in vain with an uneasy burden. The fear of what may come, expectation of what will come, desire of what will not come, and inability of redressing all these, must needs breed him continual torment. I will cast my cares upon God: he hath bidden me: they cannot hurt him; he can redress them.

XIV.

Our infancy is full of folly; youth, of disorder and toil; age, of infirmity. Each time hath his burden; and that, which may justly work our weariness: yet infancy longeth after youth; and youth, after more age; and he, that is very old, as he is a child for simplicity, so he would be for years. I account old age the best of the three; partly, for that it hath passed through the folly and disorder of the others; partly, for that the inconveniencies of this are but bodily, with a bettered estate of the mind; and partly, for that it is nearest to dissolution. There is nothing more miserable, than an old man that would be young again. It was an answer worthy the commendations of Petrarch; and that, which argued a mind truly philosophical of him, who, when his friend bemoaned his age appearing in his white temples, telling him he was sorry to see him look so old, replied, "Nay, be sorry rather, that ever I was young, to be a fool."

XV.

There is not the least action or event, whatever the vain Epicures have imagined, which is not overruled and disposed by a Providence: which is so far from detracting ought from the Majesty of God, for that the things are small; as that there can be no greater honour to him, than to extend his providence and decree to them, because they are infinite. Neither doth this hold in natural things only, which are chained one to another by a regular order of succession; but even in those things, which fall out by casualty and imprudence: whence that worthy Father, when as his speech digressed his intention to a confutation of the errors of the Manichees, could presently guess, that, in that unpurposed turning of it, God intended the conversion of some unknown auditor; as the event proved his conjecture true, ere many days. When ought falls out contrary to that I proposed, it shall content me, that God proposed it as it is fallen out: so the thing hath attained his own end, while it missed mine. I know what I would, but God knoweth

what I should will. It is enough, that his will is done, though mine be crossed.

XVI.

It is the most thankless office in the world, to be a man's pander unto sin. In other wrongs, one man is a wolf to another; but in this, a devil. And, though, at the first, this damnable service carry away reward; yet, in conclusion, it is requited with hatred and curses. For, as the sick man, extremely distasted with a loathsome potion, hateth the very cruse wherein it was brought him; so doth the conscience, once soundly detesting sin, loath the means that induced him to commit it. Contrarily, who withstands a man in his prosecution of a sin, while he doteth upon it, bears away frowns and heart-burnings for a time; but, when the offending party comes to himself and right reason, he recompenseth his former dislike, with so much more love, and so many more thanks. The frantic man, returned to his wits, thinks him his best friend, that bound him, and beat him most. I will do my best to cross any man in his sins: if I have not thanks of him, yet of my conscience I shall.

XVII.

God must be magnified in his very judgments. He looks for praise; not only for heaven, but for hell also. His justice is himself, as well as his mercy. As heaven, then, is for the praise of his mercy; so hell for the glory of his justice. We must, therefore, be so affected to judgments, as the Author of them is; who delighteth not in blood, as it makes his creature miserable, but as it makes his justice glorious. Every true Christian, then, must learn to sing that compound ditty of the Psalmist; *Of mercy, and judgment.* It shall not only joy me, to see God gracious and bountiful, in his mercies and deliverances of his own; but also to see him terrible, in vengeance to his enemies. It is no cruelty to rejoice in justice. The foolish mercy of men is cruelty to God.

XVIII.

Rareness causeth wonder, and more than that, incredulity, in those things, which, in themselves, are not more admirable, than the ordinary proceedings of nature. If a blazing star be seen in the sky, every man goes forth to gaze; and spends, every evening, some time in wondering at the beams of it. That any fowl should be bred of corrupted wood resolved into worms; or that the chameleon should ever change his colours, and live by air; that the ostrich should digest iron; that the phœnix should burn herself to ashes, and from thence breed a successor: we wonder, and can scarce credit. Other things more usual, no less miraculous, we know and neglect. That there should be a bird, that knoweth and noteth the hours of day and night, as certainly as any astronomer by the course of heaven; if we knew not, who would believe? Or that the loadstone should, by his secret virtue, so draw iron to itself, as that a whole chain of needles should all hang by insensible points at each other, only by the influence that it sends down from the first; if it were not ordinary, would seem incredible.

Who would believe, when he sees a fowl mounted as high as his sight can descry it, that there were an engine to be framed, which could fetch it down into his fist? Yea, to omit infinite examples, that a little despised creature should weave nets out of her own entrails, and in her platforms of building should observe as just proportions as the best geometrician, we should suspect for an untruth, if we saw it not daily practised in our own windows. If the sun should arise but once to the earth, I doubt, every man would be a Persian, and fall down and worship it: whereas now, it riseth and declineth without any regard. Extraordinary events each man can wonder at. The frequence of God's best works causeth neglect: not that they are ever the worse for commonness; but because we are soon cloyed with the same conceit, and have contempt bred in us through familiarity. I will learn to note God's power and wisdom, and to give him praise of both, in his ordinary works: so those things, which are but trivial to the most ignorant, shall be wonders to me; and that, not for nine days, but for ever.

XIX.

Those, that affect to tell novelties and wonders, fall into many absurdities; both in busy enquiry after matters impertinent, and in a light credulity to whatever they hear; and in fictions of their own, and additions of circumstances, to make their reports the more admired. I have noted these men, not so much wondered at for their strange stories, while they are telling; as derided afterwards, when the event hath wrought their disproof and shame. I will deal with rumours, as grave men do with strange fashions; take them up, when they are grown into common use before: I may believe, but I will not relate them but under the name of my author; who shall either warrant me with defence, if it be true; or, if false, bear my shame.

XX.

It was a witty and true speech of that obscure Heraclitus, That all men, awaking, are in one common world; but, when we sleep, each man goes into a several world by himself; which though it be but a world of fancies, yet is the true image of that little world which is in every man's heart: for the imaginations of our sleep shew us what our disposition is awaking: and, as many in their dreams reveal those their secrets to others, which they would never have done awake; so all may and do disclose to themselves in their sleep those secret inclinations, which, after much searching, they could not have found out waking. I doubt not, therefore, but as God heretofore hath taught future things in dreams, which kind of revelation is now ceased; so still he teacheth the present estate of the heart, this way. Some dreams are from ourselves, vain and idle, like ourselves: others are divine, which teach us good, or move us to good: and others devilish, which solicit us to evil. Such answer, commonly, shall I give to any temptation in the day, as I do by night. I will not lightly pass over my very dreams. They shall teach me somewhat: so neither night nor day shall be

spent unprofitably: the night shall teach me what I am; the day, what I should be.

XXI.

Men make difference betwixt servants, friends, and sons. Servants, though near us in place; yet, for their inferiority, are not familiar. Friends, though, by reason of their equality and our love, they are familiar; yet still we conceive of them as others from ourselves. But children we think of, affectionately, as the divided pieces of our own bodies. But all these are one to God: his servants are his friends; his friends are his sons; his sons, his servants. Many claim kindred of God, and profess friendship to him, because these are privileges without difficulty, and not without honour: all the trial is in service: the other are most in affection, and therefore secret, and so may be dissembled; this, consisting in action, must needs shew itself to the eyes of others. *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you:* friendship with God is in service, and this service is in action. Many wear God's cloth, that know not their Master; that never did good cheer in his service: so that God hath many retainers, that wear his livery, for a countenance; never wait on him; whom he will never own for servants, either by favour, or wages. Few servants; and, therefore, few sons. It is great favour in God, and great honour to me, that he will vouchsafe to make me the lowest drudge in his family; which place if I had not, and were a monarch of men, I were accursed. I desire no more but to serve; yet, Lord, thou givest me more, to be thy son. I hear David say, *Seemeth it a small matter to you, to be the son-in-law to a King?* What is it then, oh what is it, to be the true adopted son of the King of Glory! Let me not now say as David of Saul, but as Saul's grand-child to David; oh, *what is thy servant, that thou chouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?*

XXII.

I am a stranger here below: my home is above; yet I can think too well of these foreign vanities, and cannot think enough of my home. Surely, that is not so far above my head, as my thoughts; neither doth so far pass me in distance, as in comprehension: and yet, I would not stand so much upon conceiving, if I could admire it enough; but my strait heart is filled with a little wonder, and hath no room for the greatest part of glory that remaineth. O God, what happiness hast thou prepared for thy chosen! What a purchase was this, worthy of the blood of such a Saviour! As yet I do but look towards it, afar off; but it is easy to see by the outside, how goodly it is within: although, as thy house on earth, so that above, hath more glory within, than can be bewrayed by the outward appearance. The outer part of thy tabernacle here below, is but an earthly and base substance; but within, it is furnished with a living, spiritual, and heavenly guest: so the outer heavens, though they be as gold to all other material creatures; yet they are but dross to thee. Yet how are even the outmost walls of that house of thine beautified with glorious lights, whereof

every one is a world for bigness, and as a heaven for goodliness! Oh teach me by this to long after, and wonder at the inner part, before thou lettest me come in to behold it.

XXIII.

Riches, or beauty, or whatever worldly good that hath been, doth but grieve us: that, which is, doth not satisfy us: that, which shall be, is uncertain. What folly is it, to trust to any of them!

XXIV.

Security makes worldlings merry: and, therefore are they secure, because they are ignorant. That is only solid joy, which ariseth from a resolution; when the heart hath cast up a full account of all causes of disquietness, and findeth the causes of his joy more forcible; thereupon settling itself in a stayed course of rejoicing: for, the other, so soon as sorrow makes itself to be seen, especially in an unexpected form, is swallowed up in despair; whereas this can meet with no occurrence, which it hath not prevented in thought. Security and ignorance may scatter some refuse morsels of joy, sauced with much bitterness; or, may be like some boasting housekeeper, which keepeth open doors for one day with much cheer, and lives starvedly all the year after. There is no good Ordinary, but in a good conscience. I pity that unsound joy in others; and will seek for this sound joy in myself. I would rather weep upon a just cause, than rejoice unjustly.

XXV.

As love keeps the whole Law, so love only is the breaker of it; being the ground, as of all obedience, so of all sin: for, whereas sin hath been commonly accounted to have two roots, Love and Fear, it is plain, that fear hath his original from love; for no man fears to lose ought, but what he loves. Here is sin, and righteousness, brought both into a short sum; depending both, upon one poor affection. It shall be my only care, therefore, to bestow my love well, both for object and measure. All that is good, I may love; but in several degrees: what is simply good, absolutely: what is good by circumstance, only with limitation. There be these three things, that I may love without exception, God, my neighbour, my soul; yet so as each have their due place: my body, goods, fame, &c. as servants to the former. All other things, I will either not care for, or hate.

XXVI.

One would not think, that pride and base-mindedness should so well agree; yea, that they love so together, that they never go asunder. That envy ever proceeds from a base mind, is granted of all. Now the proud man, as he fain would be envied of others, so he envieth all men. His betters he envies, because he is not so good as they: he envies his inferiors, because he fears they should prove as good as he; his equals, because they are as good as he. So, under big looks, he bears a base mind; resembling some Cardinal's mule, which, to make up the train, bears a costly

port-mantle stuffed with trash. On the contrary, who is more proud than the basest, (the Cynick tramples on Plato's pride; but with a worse) especially if he be but a little exalted? wherein we see base men so much more haughty, as they have had less before, what they might be proud of. It is just with God, as the proud man is base in himself, so to make him basely esteemed in the eyes of others; and, at last, to make him base without pride. I will contemn a proud man, because he is base; and pity him, because he is proud.

XXVII.

Let me but have time to my thoughts; but leisure to think of heaven, and grace to my leisure; and I can be happy in spite of the world. Nothing, but God that gives it, can bereave me of grace; and he will not: for his gifts are without repentance. Nothing, but death, can abridge me of time; and, when I begin to want time to think of heaven, I shall have eternal leisure to enjoy it. I shall be both ways happy; not from any virtue of apprehension in me, (which have no peer in worthiness,) but from the glory of that I apprehend; wherein the act and object are from the author of happiness. He gives me this glory: let me give him the glory of his gift. His glory is my happiness: let my glory be his.

XXVIII.

God bestows favours upon some, in anger; as he strikes other some, in love: (the Israelites had better have wanted their quails, than to have eaten them with such sauce:) and, sometimes, at our instance removing a lesser punishment, leaves a greater, though insensible, in the room of it. I will not so much strive against affliction, as displeasure. Let me rather be afflicted in love, than prosper without it.

XXIX.

It is strange, that we men, having so continual use of God, and being so perpetually beholding to him, should be so strange to him, and so little acquainted with him: since we account it perverse nature in any man, that, being provoked with many kind offices, refuses the familiarity of a worthy friend, which doth still seek it, and hath deserved it. Whence it comes, that we are so loth to think of our dissolution, and going to God: for, naturally, where we are not acquainted, we list not to hazard our welcome; chusing rather to spend our money at a simple inn, than to turn in for a free lodging to an unknown host, whom we have only heard of, never had friendship with; whereas, to an entire friend, whose nature and welcome we know, and whom we have elsewhere familiarly conversed withal, we go as boldly and willingly as to our home, knowing that no hour can be unseasonable to such a one. While, on the other side, we scrape acquaintance with the world, that never did us good, even after many repulses. I will not live with God, and in God, without his acquaintance; knowing it my happiness to have such a friend. I will not let one day pass, without some act of renewing my familiarity with him; not giving

over, till I have given him some testimony of my love to him, and joy in him; and till he hath left behind him some pledge of his continued favour to me.

XXX.

Men, for the most part, would neither die nor be old. When we see an aged man, that hath over-lived all the teeth of his gums, the hair of his head, the sight of his eyes, the taste of his palate; we profess, we would not live till such a cumbersome age, wherein we prove burdens to our dearest friends and ourselves: yet, if it be put to our choice what year we would die, we ever shift it off till the next; and want not excuses for this prorogation; rather than fail, alleging, we would live to amend; when yet we do but add more to the heap of our sins by continuance. Nature hath nothing to plead for this folly, but that life is sweet: wherein we give occasion of renewing that ancient check, or one not unlike to it, whereby that primitive vision taxed the timorousness of the shrinking Confessors: "Ye would neither live to be old, nor die ere your age: what should I do with you?" The Christian must not think it enough, to endure the thought of death with patience, when it is obtruded upon him by necessity: but must voluntarily call it into his mind with joy; not only abiding it should come, but wishing that it might come. I will not leave, till I can resolve, if I might die to day, not to live till tomorrow.

XXXI.

As a true friend is the sweetest contentment in the world; so, in his qualities he well resembleth honey, the sweetest of all liquors. Nothing is more sweet to the taste; nothing more sharp and cleansing, when it meets with an exulcerate sore. For myself, I know I must have faults; and, therefore, I care not for that friend, that I shall never smart by. For my friends, I know they cannot be faultless; and, therefore, as they shall find me sweet in their praises and encouragements, so sharp also in their censure. Either let them abide me no friend to their faults, or no friend to themselves.

XXXII.

In all other things, we are led by profit; but, in the main matter of all, we shew ourselves utterly unthrifty: and, while we are wise in making good markets in these base commodities, we shew ourselves foolish in the great match of our souls. God and the world come both to one shop, and make proffers for our souls: the world, like a frank chapman, says, *All these will I give thee;* shewing us his bags and promotions, and thrusting them into our hands: God offers a crown of glory, which yet he tells us we must give him day to perform; and have nothing in present, but our hope and some small earnest of the bargain: though we know there is no comparison betwixt these two in value, finding these earthly things vain and unable to give any contentment, and those others of invaluable worth and benefit; yet we would rather take these in hand, than trust God on his word for the future, while yet, in the same kind, we chuse rather to take some rich lordship in reversion,

after the long expectation of three lives expired, than a present sum much under foot. As, contrarily, when God and the world are sellers, and we come to the mart, the world offers fine painted wares, but will not part with them under the price of our torment: God proclaims, *Come, ye that want; buy for nought:* now, we thrifty men, that try all shops for the cheapest pennyworth, refuse God, proffering his precious commodities for nothing; and pay a hard price for that, which is worse than nothing, painful. Surely, we are wise for any thing, but our souls: not so wise for the body, as foolish for them. O Lord, thy payment is sure; and who knows how present? Take the soul, that thou hast both made and bought; and let me rather give my life for thy favour, than take the offers of the world for nothing.

XXXIII.

There was never age, that more bragged of knowledge; and yet never any, that had less soundness. He, that knows not God, knoweth nothing; and he, that loves not God, knows him not: for he is so sweet, and infinitely full of delight, that whoever knows him cannot chuse but affect him. The little love of God then argues the great ignorance, even of those, that profess knowledge. I will not suffer my affections to run before my knowledge; for then I shall love fashionably only, because I hear God is worthy of love, and so be subject to relapses: but I will ever lay knowledge as the ground of my love; so, as I grow in divine knowledge, I shall still profit in a heavenly zeal.

XXXIV.

Those, that travel in long pilgrimages to the Holy Land, what a number of weary paces they measure! what a number of hard lodgings and known dangers they pass! and, at last, when they are come within view of their journey's end, what a large tribute pay they at the Pisan Castle to the Turks! And, when they are come thither, what see they, but the bare Sepulchre wherein their Saviour lay; and the earth, that he trod upon; to the increase of a carnal devotion? What labour should I willingly undertake, in my journey to the true Land of Promise, the Celestial Jerusalem, where I shall see and enjoy my Saviour himself! What tribute of pain or death, should I refuse to pay for my entrance, not into his Sepulchre, but his Palace of Glory; and that, not to look upon, but to possess it!

XXXV.

Those, that are all in exhortation, no whit in doctrine, are like to them, that snuff the candle, but pour not in oil. Again, those, that are all in doctrine, nothing in exhortation, drown the wick in oil, but light it not: making it fit for use, if it had fire put to it; but, as it is, rather capable of good, than profitable in present. Doctrine, without exhortation, makes men all brain, no heart: exhortation, without doctrine, makes the heart full, leaves the brain empty. Both together make a man. One makes a man wise;

the other, good: one serves that we may know our duty; the other, that we may perform it. I will labour in both: but I know not in whether more. Men cannot practise, unless they know; and they know in vain, if they practise not.

XXXVI.

There be two things, in every good work; honour, and profit: the latter, God bestows upon us; the former, he keeps to himself. The profit of our works redoundeth not to God: *My well-doing extendeth not to thee.* The honour of our work may not be allowed us: *My glory I will not give to another.* I will not abridge God of his part, that he may not bereave me of mine.

XXXVII.

The proud man hath no God: the envious man hath no neighbour: the angry man hath not himself. What can that man have, that wants himself? What is a man better, if he have himself, and want all others? What is he the nearer, if he have himself, and others, and yet want God? What good is it then to be a man, if he be either wrathful, proud, or envious?

XXXVIII.

Man, that was once the sovereign lord of all creatures, whom they serviceably attended at all times, is now sent to the very basest of all creatures, to learn good qualities; *Go to the pismire, &c.* and sees the most contemptible creatures preferred before him; *The ass knoweth his owner.* Wherein we, like the miserable heir of some great peer, whose house is decayed through the treason of our progenitors, hear and see what honours and lordships we should have had; but now find ourselves below many of the vulgar. We have not so much cause of exaltation, that we are men, and not beasts; as we have of humiliation, in thinking how much we were once better than we are, and that now in many duties we are men inferior to beasts: so as those, whom we contemn, if they had our reason, might more justly contemn us; and, as they are, may teach us by their examples, and do condemn us by their practice.

XXXIX.

The idle man is the Devil's cushion, on which he taketh his free ease: who, as he is uncapable of any good, so he is fitly disposed for all evil motions. The standing water soon stinketh: whereas the current ever keeps clear and cleanly; conveying down all noisome matter, that might infect it, by the force of his stream. If I do but little good to others, by my endeavours; yet this is great good to me, that, by my labour, I keep myself from hurt.

XL.

There can be no nearer conjunction in nature, than is betwixt the body and the soul: yet these two are of so contrary disposition, that, as it falls out in an ill-matched man and wife, those servants, which the one likes best, are most dispraised of the other; so here, one still takes part against the other in their choice.

What benefits the one, is the hurt of the other: the glutting of the body pines the soul; and the soul thrives best, when the body is pinched. Who can wonder, that there is such faction amongst others, that sees so much in his very self? True wisdom, is, to take, not with the stronger, as the fashion of the world is, but with the better: following herein, not usurped power, but justice. It is not hard to discern, whose the right is; whether the servant should rule, or the mistress. I will labour to make and keep the peace, by giving each part his own indifferently; but, if more be affected with an ambitious contention, I will rather beat Hagar out of doors, than she shall over-rule her mistress.

XLI.

I see iron, first, heated red-hot in the fire; and, after, beaten and hardened with cold water. Thus will I deal with an offending friend: first, heat him with deserved praise of his virtue; and, then, beat upon him with apprehension: so, good nurses, when their children are fallen, first take them up and speak them fair, chide them afterwards. Gentle speech is a good preparative for rigour. He shall see, that I love him, by my approbation; and that I love not his faults, by my reproof. If he love himself, he will love those that mislike his vices; and if he love not himself, it matters not whether he love me.

XLII.

The liker we are to God, which is the best and only good, the better and happier we must needs be. All sins make us unlike him, as being contrary to his perfect holiness; but some shew more direct contrariety. Such is envy; for, whereas God bringeth good out of evil, the envious man fetcheth evil out of good: wherein also his sin proves a kind of punishment: for, whereas to good men even evil things work together to their good; contrarily, to the envious good things work together to their evil. The evil, in any man, though never so prosperous, I will not envy; but pity: the good graces, I will not repine at; but holily emulate; rejoicing that they are so good, but grieving that I am no better.

XLIII.

The covetous man is like a spider: as in this, that he doth nothing but lay his nets to catch every fly, gaping only for a booty of gain; so, yet more, in that, while he makes nets for these flies, he consumeth his own bowels: so, that, which is his life, is his death. If there be any creature miserable, it is he; and yet he is least to be pitied, because he makes himself miserable. Such as he is, I will account him; and will, therefore, sweep down his webs, and hate his poison.

XLIV.

In heaven, there is all life, and no dying: in hell, is all death, and no life: in earth, there is both living and dying; which, as it is betwixt both, so it prepares for both. So that he, which here below dies to sin, doth after live in heaven; and, contrarily, he, that lives in sin upon earth, dies in hell afterward. What if I have

no part of joy here below, but still succession of afflictions? The wicked have no part in heaven, and yet they enjoy the earth with pleasure: I would not change portions with them. I rejoice, that, seeing I cannot have both, yet I have the better. O Lord, let me pass both my deaths here upon earth. I care not how I live or die, so I may have nothing but life, to look for in another world.

XLV.

The conceit of propriety hardens a man against many inconveniences, and addeth much to our pleasure. The mother abides many unquiet nights, many painful throws, and unpleasant savours of her child, upon this thought, "It is my own." The indulgent father magnifies that in his own son, which he would scarce like in a stranger. The want of this to God-ward, makes us so subject to discontentment, and cooleth our delight in him; because we think of him aloof, as one in whom we are not interested. If we could think, "It is my God, that cheereth me with his presence and blessings, while I prosper; that afflicteth me in love, when I am dejected: my Saviour is at God's right hand; my angels stand in his presence;" it could not be, but God's favour would be sweeter, his chastisements more easy, his benefits more effectual. I am not mine own, while God is not mine; and, while he is mine, since I do possess him, I will enjoy him.

XLVI.

Nature is, of her own inclination, froward; importunately longing after that which is denied her, and scornful of what she may have. If it were appointed, that we should live always upon earth, how extremely should we exclaim of weariness, and wish rather that we were not! Now it is appointed we shall live here but a while, and then give room to our successors, each one affects a kind of eternity upon earth. I will labour to tame this peevish and sullen humour of nature; and will like that best, that must be.

XLVII.

All true earthly pleasure forsook man, when he forsook his Creator. What honest and holy delight he took before, in the dutiful services of the obsequious creatures; in the contemplation of that admirable variety and strangeness of their properties; in seeing their sweet accordance with each other, and all with himself! Now, most of our pleasure is, to set one creature together by the ears with another; sporting ourselves only with that deformity, which was bred through our own fault. Yea, there have been, that have delighted to see one man spill another's blood upon the sand; and have shouted for joy at the sight of that slaughter, which hath fallen out upon no other quarrel, but the pleasure of the beholders. I doubt not, as we solace ourselves in the discord of the inferior creatures, so the evil spirits sport themselves in our dissensions. There are better qualities of the creature, which we pass over without pleasure. In recreations. I will chuse those,

which are of best example, and best use; seeking those, by which I may not only be the merrier, but the better.

XLVIII.

There is no want, for which a man may not find a remedy in himself. Do I want Riches? he, that desires but little, cannot want much. Do I want Friends? if I love God enough, and myself but enough, it matters not. Do I want Health? if I want it but a little, and recover; I shall esteem it the more, because I wanted: if I be long sick, and unrecoverably, I shall be the fitter and willinger to die; and my pain is so much less sharp, by how much more it lingereth. Do I want Maintenance? a little, and coarse, will content nature: let my mind be no more ambitious, than my back and belly; I can hardly complain of too little. Do I want Sleep? I am going whither there is no use of sleep; where all rest, and sleep not. Do I want Children? many, that have them, wish they wanted: it is better to be childless, than crossed with their miscarriage. Do I want Learning? he hath none, that saith he hath enough: the next way to get more, is, to find thou wantest. There is remedy for all wants, in ourselves; saving only, for want of Grace: and that, a man cannot so much as see and complain that he wants, but from above.

XLIX.

Every virtuous action, like the sun eclipsed, hath a double shadow; according to the divers aspects of the beholders: one, of glory; the other, of envy: glory follows upon good deserts; envy, upon glory. He, that is envied, may think himself well; for he, that envies him, thinks him more than well. I know no vice in another, whereof a man may make so good and comfortable use to himself. There would be no shadow, if there were no light.

L.

In meddling with the faults of friends, I have observed many wrongful courses; what for fear, or self-love, or indiscretion. Some I have seen, like unmerciful and covetous chirurgeons, keep the wound raw, which they might have seasonably remedied, for their own gain: others, that have laid healing plaisters, to skin it aloft; when there hath been more need of corrosives, to eat out the dead flesh within: others, that have galled and drawn; when there hath been nothing but solid flesh, that hath wanted only filling up: others, that have healed the sore; but left an unsightly scar of discredit behind them. He, that would do good this way, must have fidelity, courage, discretion, patience: fidelity, not to bear with; courage, to reprove them; discretion, to reprove them well; patience, to abide the leisure of amendment; making much of good beginnings, and putting up many repulses; bearing with many weaknesses; still hoping, still soliciting; as knowing, that those, who have been long used to fetters, cannot but halt a while, when they are taken off.

LI.

God hath made all the world, and yet what a little part of it is his! Divide the world into four parts: but one, and the least, containeth all that is worthy the name of Christendom; the rest overwhelmed with Turkism and Paganism: and, of this least part, the greater half, yet holding aright concerning God and their Saviour in some common principles, overthrow the truth in their conclusions; and so leave the lesser part of the least part for God. Yet lower: of those, that hold aright concerning Christ, how few are there, that do otherwise than fashionably profess him! And, of those, that do seriously profess him, how few are there, that in their lives deny him not; living unworthy of so glorious a calling! Wherein, I do not pity God, who will have glory even of those that are not his: I pity miserable men, that do reject their Creator and Redeemer, and themselves in him: and I envy Satan, that he ruleth so large. Since God hath so few, I will be more thankful that he hath vouchsafed me one of his; and be the more zealous of glorifying him, because we have but a few fellows.

LII.

As those, that have tasted of some delicate dish, find other plain dishes but unpleasant; so it fareth with those, which have once tasted of heavenly things: they cannot but contemn the best worldly pleasures. As, therefore, some dainty guest, knowing there is so pleasant fare to come; I will reserve my appetite for it, and not suffer myself cloyed with the coarse diet of the world.

LIII.

I find many places, where God hath used the hand of good angels for the punishment of the wicked; but never could yet find one, wherein he employed an evil angel in any direct good to his children: indirect I find many, if not all; through the power of him, that brings light out of darkness, and turns their evil to our good. In this choice, God would and must be imitated. From an evil spirit I dare not receive ought, if never so good: I will receive as little as I may, from a wicked man: if he were as perfectly evil as the other, I durst receive nothing. I would rather hunger, than wilfully dip my hand in a wicked man's dish.

LIV.

We are ready to condemn others, for that, which is as eminently faulty in ourselves. If one blind man rush upon another in the way, either complains of other's blindness; neither, of his own. I have heard those, which have had most corrupt lungs, complain of the unsavoury breath of others. The reason is, because the mind casteth altogether outward, and reflecteth not into itself. Yet it is more shameful, to be either ignorant of, or favourable to, our own imperfections. I will censure others' vices fearfully; my own confidently, because I know them: and those I know not, I will suspect.

LV.

He is a very humble man, that thinks not himself better than some others; and he is very mean, whom some others do not account better than themselves: so, that vessel, that seemed very small upon the Main, seems a tall ship upon the Thames. As there are many better for estate than myself, so there are some worse; and, if I were yet worse, yet would there be some lower; and, if I were so low that I accounted myself the worst of all, yet some would account themselves in worse case. A man's opinion is in others: his being is in himself. Let me know myself: let others guess at me. Let others either envy or pity me; I care not, so long as I enjoy myself.

LVI.

He can never wonder enough at God's workmanship, that knows not the frame of the world: for he can never else conceive of the hugeness, and strange proportion of the creature. And he, that knows this, can never wonder more at any thing else. I will learn to know, that I may admire; and, by that little I know, I will more wonder at that I know not.

LVII.

There is nothing below, but toiling, grieving, wishing, hoping, fearing; and weariness in all these. What fools are we, to be besotted with the love of our own trouble, and to hate our liberty and rest! The love of misery is much worse, than misery itself. We must first pray, that God would make us wise; before we can wish, he would make us happy.

LVIII.

If a man refer all things to himself, nothing seems enough: if all things to God, any measure will content him of earthly things; but in grace he is insatiable. Worldlings serve themselves altogether in God; making religion but to serve their turns, as a colour of their ambition and covetousness. The Christian seeks God only in seeking himself; using all other things but as subordinately to him: not caring whether himself win or lose, so that God may win glory in both. I will not suffer mine eyes and mind to be bounded with these visible things; but still look through these matters at God, which is the utmost scope of them: accounting them only as a thoroughfare, to pass by; not as a habitation, to rest in.

LIX.

He is wealthy enough, that wanteth not: he is great enough, that is his own master: he is happy enough, that lives to die well. Other things I will not care for; nor too much for these: save only for the last, which alone can admit of no immoderation.

LX.

A man of extraordinary parts makes himself, by strange and singular behaviour, more admired; which if a man of but common

faculty do imitate, he makes himself ridiculous: for that, which is construed as natural to the one, is descried to be affected in the other; and there is nothing forced by affectation can be comely. I will ever strive to go in the common road: so, while I am not notable, I shall not be notorious.

LXI.

Gold is the best metal; and, for the purity, not subject to rust, as all others: and yet the best gold hath some dross. I esteem not that man, that hath no faults: I like him well, that hath but a few; and those, not great.

LXII.

Many a man mars a good estate, for want of skill to proportion his carriage answerably to his ability. A little sail to a large vessel rids no way, though the wind be fair: a large sail to a little bark drowns it: a top-sail to a ship of mean burthen, in a rough weather, is dangerous: a low sail, in an easy gale, yields little advantage. This disproportion causeth some to live miserably, in a good estate; and some to make a good estate miserable. I will first know, what I may do for safety; and then I will try, what I can do for speed.

LXIII.

The rich man hath many friends; although, in truth, riches have them, and not the man: as the ass, that carried the Egyptian Goddess, had many bowed knees; yet not to the beast, but to the burthen. For, separate the riches from the person, and thou shalt see friendship leave the man; and follow that, which was ever her object: while he may command, and can either give or control, he hath attendance and proffer of love at all hands; but which of these dares acknowledge him, when he is going to prison for debt? Then these wasps, that made such music about this gallipot, shew plainly, that they came only for the honey that was in it. This is the misery of the wealthy, that they cannot know their friends: whereas those, that love the poor man, love him for himself. He, that would chuse a true friend, must search out one, that is neither covetous nor ambitious; for such a one loves but himself in thee. And if it be rare to find any not infected with these qualities, the best is to entertain all, and trust few.

LXIV.

That, which the French Proverb hath of sicknesses, is true of all evils: That they come on horseback, and go away on foot. We have oft seen a sudden fall; or one meal's surfeit hath stuck by many to their graves: whereas pleasures come like oxen, slow and heavily; and go away like post-horses, upon the spur. Sorrows, because they are lingering guests, I will entertain but moderately; knowing, that the more they are made of, the longer they will continue: and, for pleasures, because they stay not, and do but call to drink at my door; I will use them as passengers, with slight respect. He is his own best friend, that makes least of both of them.

LXV.

It is indeed more commendable, to give good example, than to take it; yet imitation, however in civil matters it be condemned of servility, in Christian practice hath his due praise: and, though it be more natural for beginners at their first initiation, that cannot swim without bladders; yet the best proficient shall see ever some higher steps of those, that have gone to heaven before him, worthy of his tracing. Wherein much caution must be had; that we follow good men, and in good: good men; for, if we propound imperfect patterns to ourselves, we shall be constrained first to unlearn those ill habits we have got by their imitation, before we can be capable of good; so, besides the loss of labour, we are further off from our end: in good; for, that a man should be so wedded to any man's person, that he can make no separation from his infirmities, is both absurdly servile and unchristian. He, therefore, that would follow well, must know to distinguish well, betwixt good men and evil; betwixt good men and better; betwixt good qualities and infirmities. Why hath God given me education, not in a desert alone, but in the company of good and virtuous men, but that, by the sight of their good carriage, I should better mine own? Why should we have interest in the vices of men, and not in their virtues? And, although precepts be surer, yet a good man's action is according to precept; yea, is a precept itself. The Psalmist compares the Law of God to a Lanthorn: good example bears it. It is safe following him, that carries the light: if he walk without the light, he shall walk without me.

LXVI.

As there is one common end to all good men, Salvation; and one Author of it, Christ: so, there is but one way to it, doing well and suffering evil. Doing well, methinks, is like the Zodiac in the heaven, the high-way of the sun, through which it daily passeth: suffering evil, is like the Ecliptic-line, that goes through the midst of it. The rule of doing well, the Law of God, is uniform and eternal; and the copies of suffering evil in all times agree with the original. No man can either do well or suffer ill, without an example. Are we sawn in pieces? so was Isaiah. Are we beheaded? so John Baptist. Crucified? so Peter. Thrown to wild beasts? so Daniel. Into the furnace? so the three children. Stoned? so Stephen. Banished? so the Beloved Disciple. Burnt? so millions of Martyrs. Defamed and slandered? what good man ever was not? It were easy to be endless both in torments and sufferers: whereof each hath begun to other, all to us. I may not hope to speed better than the best Christians: I cannot fear to fare worse. It is no matter, which way I go, so I come to heaven.

LXVII.

There is nothing, beside life, of this nature, that it is diminished by addition. Every moment we live longer than other; and each moment, that we live longer, is so much taken out of our life. It

increaseth and diminisheth only by minutes; and, therefore, is not perceived: the shorter steps it taketh, the more slily it passeth. Time shall not so steal upon me, that I shall not discern it, and catch it by the fore-locks; nor so steal from me, that it shall carry with it no witness of his passage in my proficiency.

LXVIII.

The prodigal man, while he spendeth, is magnified; when he is spent, is pitied: and that is all his recompence for his lavished patrimony. The covetous man is grudged while he lives, and his death is rejoiced at; for, when he ends, his riches begin to be goods. He, that wisely keeps the mean between both, liveth well, and hears well; neither repined at by the needy, nor pitied by greater men. I would so manage these worldly commodities, as accounting them mine, to dispose; others', to partake of.

LXIX.

A good name (if any earthly thing) is worth seeking, worth striving for: yet, to affect a bare name, when we deserve either ill or nothing, is but a proud hypocrisy; and, to be puffed up with the wrongful estimation of others' mistaking our worth, is an idle and ridiculous pride. Thou art well spoken of upon no desert: what then? thou hast deceived thy neighbours; they, one another; and all of them have deceived thee: for thou madest them think of thee otherwise than thou art; and they have made thee think of thyself as thou art accounted: the deceit came from thee; the shame will end in thee. I will account no wrong greater, than for a man to esteem and report me above that I am: not rejoicing, in that I am well thought of, but in that I am such as I am esteemed.

LXX.

It was a speech worthy the commendation and frequent remembrance, of so divine a Bishop as Augustin, which is reported of an aged Father in his time; who, when his friends comforted him on his sick-bed, and told him, they hoped he should recover, answered, "If I shall not die at all, well; but if ever, why not now?" Surely, it is folly, what we must do, to do unwillingly. I will never think my soul in a good case, so long as I am loth to think of dying: and will make this my comfort; not, I shall yet live longer, but, I shall yet do more good.

LXXI.

Excesses are never alone. Commonly, those, that have excellent parts, have some extremely vicious qualities. Great wits have great errors, and great estates have great cares; whereas mediocrity of gifts or of estate hath usually but easy inconveniences: else the excellent would not know themselves, and the mean would be too much dejected: now, those, whom we admire for their faculties, we pity for their infirmities; and those, which find themselves but of the ordinary pitch, joy, that, as their virtues, so their vices are not eminent: so, the highest have a blemished glory, and the

mean are contentedly secure. I will magnify the highest; but affect the mean.

LXXII.

The body is the case or sheath of the mind: yet, as naturally it hideth it; so it doth also, many times, discover it: for, although the forehead, eyes, and frame of the countenance do sometime belie the disposition of the heart; yet, most commonly, they give true general verdicts. An angry man's brows are bent together, and his eyes sparkle with rage; which, when he is well pleased, look smooth and cheerfully. Envy hath one look; desire, another; sorrow, yet another; contentment, a fourth, different from all the rest. To shew no passion, is too stoical; to shew all, is impotent; to shew other than we feel, hypocritical. The face and gesture do but write and make commentaries upon the heart. I will first endeavour so to frame and order that, as not to entertain any passion, but what I need not care to have laid open to the world: and, therefore, will first see that the text be good; then, that the gloss be true; and, lastly, that it be sparing. To what end hath God so walled in the heart, if I should let every man's eyes into it by my countenance?

LXXIII.

There is no public action, which the world is not ready to scan: there is no action so private, which the evil spirits are not witnesses of: I will endeavour so to live, as knowing that I am ever in the eyes of mine enemies.

LXXIV.

When we ourselves and all other vices are old, then covetousness alone is young, and at his best age. This vice loves to dwell in an old, ruinous cottage: yet that age can have no such honest colour for niggardliness and insatiable desire. A young man might plead the uncertainty of his estate, and doubt of his future need; but an old man sees his set period before him. Since this humour is so necessarily annexed to this age, I will turn it the right way; and nourish it in myself: the older I grow, the more covetous I will be; but of the riches, not of the world I am leaving, but of the world I am entering into. It is good coveting, what I may have, and cannot leave behind me.

LXXV.

There is a mutual hatred, betwixt a Christian and the world: for, on the one side, the love of the world is enmity with God, and God's children cannot but take their Father's part: on the other, *The world hates you, because it hated me first.* But the hatred of the good man to the wicked is not so extreme, as that wherewith he is hated: for the Christian hates ever with commiseration and love of that good he sees in the worst; knowing, that the essence of the very devils is good; and that the lewdest man hath some excellent parts of nature, or common graces of the Spirit of God, which he warily singleth out in his affection: but the wicked man hates him for goodness; and, therefore, finds nothing in himself to

moderate his detestation. There can be no better music in mine ear, than the discord of the wicked. If he like me, I am afraid he spies some quality in me, like to his own. If he saw nothing but goodness, he could not love me, and be bad himself. It was a just doubt of Phocion, who, when the people praised him, asked, "What evil have I done?" I will strive to deserve evil of none; but, not deserving ill, it shall not grieve me to hear ill of those that are evil. I know no greater argument of goodness, than the hatred of a wicked man.

LXXVI.

A man, that comes hungry to his meal, feeds heartily on the meat set before him, not regarding the metal or form of the platter, wherein it is served; who, afterwards, when his stomach is satisfied, begins to play with the dish, or to read sentences on his trencher. Those auditors, which can find nothing to do, but note elegant words and phrases, or rhetorical colours, or perhaps an ill grace of gesture in a pithy and material speech, argue themselves full, ere they came to the feast; and, therefore, go away with a little pleasure, no profit. In hearing others, my only intention shall be to feed my mind with solid matter: if my ear can get ought by the way, I will not grudge it; but I will not intend it.

LXXVII.

The joy of a Christian in these worldly things is limited, and ever awed with fear of excess; but recompensed abundantly with his spiritual mirth: whereas the worldling gives the reins to the mind, and pours himself into pleasure; fearing only that he shall not joy enough. He, that is but half a Christian, lives but miserably; for he neither enjoyeth God, nor the world: not God, because he hath not grace enough to make him his own; not the world, because he hath some taste of grace, enough to shew him the vanity and sin of his pleasures. So, the sound Christian hath his heaven above; the worldling, here below; the unsettled Christian, no where.

LXXVIII.

Good deeds are very fruitful; and, not so much of their nature, as of God's blessing, multipliable. We think ten in the hundred extreme and biting usury: God gives us more than a hundred for ten; yea, above the increase of the grain, which we commend most for multiplication: for, out of one good action of ours, God produceth a thousand; the harvest whereof is perpetual. Even the faithful actions of the old Patriarchs, the constant sufferings of ancient Martyrs, live still; and do good to all successions of ages, by their example: for public actions of virtue, besides that they are presently comfortable to the doers, are also exemplary to others; and, as they are more beneficial to others, so are more crowned in us. If good deeds were utterly barren and incommodious, I would seek after them, for the conscience of their own goodness: how much more shall I now be encouraged to perform them, for that they are so profitable both to myself, and to others, and to me in

others! My principal care shall be, that while my soul lives in glory in heaven, my good actions may live upon earth; and that they might be put into the bank and multiply, while my body lies in the grave and consumeth.

LXXIX.

A Christian, for the sweet fruit he bears to God and men, is compared to the noblest of all plants, the Vine. Now as the most generous vine, if it be not pruned, runs out into many superfluous stems, and grows at last weak and fruitless: so doth the best man, if he be not cut short of his desires, and pruned with afflictions. If it be painful to bleed, it is worse to wither. Let me be pruned, that I may grow; rather than cut up, to burn.

LXXX.

Those, that do but superficially taste of divine knowledge, find but little sweetness in it; and are ready, for the unpleasant relish, to abhor it: whereas, if they would dive deep into the sea, they should find fresh water near to the bottom. That it savours not well at the first, is the fault, not of it, but of the distempered palate that tastes it. Good metals and minerals are not found close under the skin of the earth, but below in the bowels of it. No good miner casts away his mattock, because he finds a vein of tough clay, or a shelf of stone; but still delveth lower; and, passing through many changes of soil, at last comes to his rich treasure. We are too soon discouraged in our spiritual gains. I will still persevere to seek; hardening myself against all difficulty. There is comfort even in seeking, hope; and there is joy in hoping, good success; and in that success, is happiness.

LXXXI.

He, that hath any experience in spiritual matters, knows that Satan is ever more violent at the last: then raging most furiously, when he knows he shall rage but a while. Hence, of the first persecutions of the first Church, the tenth and last, under Diocletian and Maximinian and those other five Tyrants, was the bloodiest. Hence, this age is the most dissolute; because nearest the conclusion. And, as this is his course, in the universal assaults of the whole Church; so it is the same, in his conflicts with every Christian soul. Like a subtle orator, he reserves his strongest force till the shutting up: and, therefore, miserable is the folly of those men, who defer their repentance till then, when their onset shall be most sharp; and they, through pain of body and perplexedness of mind, shall be least able to resist. Those, that have long furnished themselves with spiritual munition, find work enough in this extreme brunt of temptation: how then should the careless man, that, with the help of all opportunities, could not find grace to repent, hope to atchieve it at the last gasp, against greater force, with less means, more distraction, no leisure? Wise princes use to prepare ten years before, for a field of one day: I will every day lay up somewhat for my last. If I win that skirmish, I have enough. The first and second blow begin the battle; but the last only wins it.

LXXXII.

I observe three seasons, where a wise man differs not from a fool; in his infancy, in sleep, and in silence: for, in the two former, we are all fools; and, in silence, all are wise. In the two former yet, there may be concealment of folly; but the tongue is a blab: there cannot be any kind of folly, either simple or wicked, in the heart, but the tongue will bewray it. He cannot be wise, that speaks much, or without sense, or out of season; nor he known for a fool, that says nothing. It is a great misery, to be a fool; but this is yet greater, that a man cannot be a fool, but he must shew it. It were well for such a one, if he could be taught to keep close his foolishness: but then there should be no fools. I have heard some, which have scorned the opinion of folly in themselves, for a speech wherein they have hoped to shew most wit, censured of folly, by him, that hath thought himself wiser; and another, hearing his sentence again, hath condemned him for want of wit in censuring. Surely, he is not a fool, that hath unwise thoughts, but he, that utters them. Even concealed folly is wisdom; and sometimes, wisdom uttered, is folly. While others care how to speak, my care shall be how to hold my peace.

LXXXIII.

A work is then only good and acceptable, when the action, meaning, and manner are all good: for, to do good with an ill meaning, as Judas saluted Christ to betray him, is so much more sinful, by how much the action is better; which, being good in the kind, is abused to an ill purpose. To do ill in a good meaning, as Uzzah, in staying the Ark, is so much amiss, that the good intention cannot bear out the unlawful act: which although it may seem some excuse, why it should not be so ill; yet is no warrant to justify it. To mean well, and do a good action in an ill manner, as the Pharisee made a good prayer but arrogantly, is so offensive, that the evil manner depraveth both the other. So, a thing may be evil, upon one circumstance: it cannot be good, but upon all. In whatever business I go about, I will enquire, What I do, for the substance; How, for the manner; Why, for the intention: for the two first, I will consult with God; for the last, with my own heart.

LXXXIV.

I can do nothing without a million of witnesses: the conscience is as a thousand witnesses; and God is as a thousand consciences: I will, therefore, so deal with men, as knowing that God sees me; and so with God, as if the world saw me; so with myself, and both of them, as knowing that my conscience seeth me: and so with them all, as knowing I am always overlooked by my accuser, by my Judge.

LXXXV.

Earthly inheritances are divided, ofttimes, with much inequality. The privilege of primogeniture stretcheth larger in many places now, than it did among the ancient Jews. The younger, many times, serves the elder; and, while the eldest aboundeth, all the lat-

ter issue is pinched. In heaven it is not so: all the sons of God are heirs; none underlings: and not heirs under wardship and hope, but inheritors; and not inheritors of any little pittance of land, but of a kingdom; nor of an earthly kingdom, subject to danger of loss or alteration, but one glorious and everlasting. It shall content me here, that, having right to all things, yet I have possession of nothing but sorrow. Since I shall have possession above, of all that, whereto I have right below, I will serve willingly, that I may reign; serve for a while, that I may reign for ever.

LXXXVI.

Even the best things, ill used, become evils; and, contrarily, the worst things, used well, prove good. A good tongue, used to deceit; a good wit, used to defend error; a strong arm, to murder; authority, to oppress; a good profession, to dissemble; are all evil: yea, God's own word is *the sword of the Spirit;* which, if it kill not our vices, kills our souls. Contrariwise, as poisons are used to wholesome medicine, afflictions and sins, by a good use prove so gainful, as nothing more. Words are, as they are taken; and things are, as they are used. There are even cursed blessings. O Lord, rather give me no favours, than not grace to use them. If I want them, thou requirest not what thou dost not give; but, if I have them, and want their use, thy mercy proves my judgment.

LXXXVII.

Man is the best of all these inferior creatures; yet lives in more sorrow and discontentment, than the worst of them: while that reason, wherein he excels them and by which he might make advantage of his life, he abuses to a suspicious distrust. How many hast thou found of the fowls of the air, lying dead in the way for want of provision? They eat, and rest, and sing, and want nothing. Man, which hath far better means to live comfortably, toileth, and careth, and wanteth: whom yet his reason alone might teach, that He, which careth for these lower creatures, made only for man, will much more provide for man, to whose use they were made. There is a holy carelessness; free from idleness; free from distrust. In these earthly things, I will so depend on my Maker, that my trust in him may not exclude all my labour; and yet so labour, upon my confidence on him, as my endeavour may be void of perplexity.

LXXXVIII.

The precepts and practice of those, with whom we live, avail much on either part. For a man not to be ill, where he hath no provocations to evil, is less commendable: but, for a man to live continently in Asia (as he said), where he sees nothing but allurements to uncleanness; for Lot to be a good man, in the midst of Sodom; to be abstemious, in Germany; and, in Italy, chaste; this is truly praise-worthy. To sequester ourselves from the company of the world, that we may depart from their vices, proceeds from a base and distrusting mind: as if we would so force goodness upon

ourselves, that therefore only we would be good, because we cannot be ill: but, for a man so to be personally and locally in the throng of the world, as to withdraw his affections from it; to use it, and yet to contemn it, at once; to compel it to his service, without any infection; becomes well the noble courage of a Christian. The world shall be mine, I will not be his; and yet so mine, that his evil shall be still his own.

LXXXIX.

He, that lives in God, cannot be weary of his life; because he ever finds, both somewhat to do, and somewhat to solace himself with: cannot be over-loth to part with it; because he shall enter into a nearer life and society with that God, in whom he delighteth. Whereas, he, that lives without him, lives many times uncomfortably here; because, partly he knows not any cause of joy in himself, and partly he finds not any worthy employment to while himself withal: dies miserably; because he either knows not whither he goes, or knows he goes to torment. There is no true life, but the life of faith. O Lord, let me live out of the world with thee, if thou wilt; but let me not live in the world without thee.

XC.

Sin is both evil in itself, and the effect of a former evil, and the cause of sin following; a cause of punishment; and, lastly, a punishment itself. It is a damnable iniquity in man, to multiply one sin upon another: but, to punish one sin by another, in God is a judgment both most just and most fearful; so as all the store-house of God hath not a greater vengeance: with other punishments, the body smarteth; the soul, with this. I care not how God offends me with punishments, so he punish me not with offending him.

XCI.

I have seen some afflict their bodies with wilful famine, and scourges of their own making. God spares me that labour: for he whips me daily, with the scourge of a weak body; and, sometimes, with ill tongues. He holds me short, many times, of the feeling of his comfortable presence; which is, in truth, so much more miserable a hunger than that of the body, by how much the soul is more tender, and the food denied more excellent. He is my Father; infinitely wise, to proportion out my correction according to my estate; and infinitely loving, in fitting me with a due measure. He is a presumptuous child, that will make choice of his own rod. Let me learn to make a right use of his corrections, and I shall not need to correct myself. And, if it should please God to remit his hand a little; I will govern my body, as a master, not as a tyrant.

XCII.

If God had not said, *Blessed are those that hunger*, I know not what could keep weak Christians from sinking in despair. Many times, all I can do, is, to find and complain that I want him, and wish to recover him: now, this is my stay, that he in mercy esteems

us, not only by having, but by desiring also; and, after a sort, accounts us to have that, which we want, and desire to have: and, my soul assuming, tells me I do unfeignedly wish him, and long after that grace I miss. Let me desire still more, and I know I shall not desire always. There was never soul miscarried with longing after grace. O blessed hunger, that ends always in fulness! I am sorry, that I can but hunger: and yet I would not be full; for the blessing is promised to the hungry. Give me more, Lord, but so as I may hunger more. Let me hunger more, and I know I shall be satisfied.

XCIII.

There is more in the Christian, than thou seest: for he is both an entire body of himself, and he is a limb of another more excellent; even that glorious mystical body of his Saviour; to whom he is so united, that the actions of either are reciprocally referred to each other. For, on the one side, the Christian lives in Christ, dies in Christ, in Christ fulfils the Law, possesseth heaven; on the other, Christ is persecuted by Paul in his members, and is persecuted in Paul afterwards by others; he suffers in us, he lives in us, he works in and by us: so thou canst not do either good or harm to a Christian, but thou dost it to his Redeemer, to whom he is invisibly united. Thou seest him as a man; and, therefore, worthy of favour, for humanity's sake: thou seest him not as a Christian, worthy of honour, for his secret and yet true union with our Saviour. I will love every Christian, for that I see; honour him, for that I shall see.

XCIV.

Hell itself is scarce a more obscure dungeon, in comparison of the earth; than earth is, in respect of heaven. Here, the most see nothing, and the best see little: here, half our life is night; and our very day is darkness, in respect of God. The true Light of the World, and the Father of Lights, dwelleth above: there is the light of knowledge to inform us, and the light of joy to comfort us; without all change of darkness. There was never any captive loved his dungeon; and complained, when he must be brought out to light and liberty. Whence, then, is this natural madness in us men, that we delight so much in this unclean, noisome, dark, and comfortless prison of earth; and think not of our release to that lightsome and glorious paradise above us, without grief and repining? We are sure, that we are not perfectly well here: if we could be as sure, that we should be better above, we would not fear changing. Certainly, our sense tells us we have some pleasure here; and we have not faith to assure us of more pleasure above: and hence, we settle ourselves to the present, with neglect of the future, though infinitely more excellent. The heart follows the eyes: and unknown good is uncared for. O Lord, do thou break through this darkness of ignorance and faithlessness, wherewith I am compassed. Let me but see my heaven, and I know I shall desire it.

XCV.

To be carried away with an affectation of fame, is so vain and ab-

surd, that I wonder it can be incident to any wise man: for what a mole-hill of earth is it, to which his name can extend, when it is furthest carried by the wings of report! And how short a while doth it continue, where it is once spread! Time, the devourer of his own brood, consumes both us and our memories: not brass, nor marble can bear age. How many flattering poets have promised immortality of name to their princes, who now together are buried long since in forgetfulness! Those names and actions, that are once on the file of heaven, are past the danger of defacing. I will not care whether I be known, or remembered, or forgotten amongst men; if my name and good actions may live with God, in the records of eternity.

XCVI.

There is no man, nor no place, free from spirits; although they testify their presence by visible effects but in few. Every man is a host to entertain angels, though not in visible shapes, as Abraham and Lot. The evil ones do nothing, but provoke us to sin, and plot mischiefs against us, by casting into our way dangerous objects; by suggesting sinful motions to our minds; by stirring up enemies against us amongst men; by frighting us with terrors in ourselves; by accusing us to God: on the contrary, the good angels are ever removing our hindrances from good, and our occasions of evil; mitigating our temptations; helping us against our enemies; delivering us from dangers; comforting us in sorrows; furthering our good purposes; and, at last, carrying up our souls to heaven. It would affright a weak Christian, that knows the power and malice of wicked spirits, to consider their presence and number; but when, with the eyes of Elisha's servant, he sees those on his side at present, as diligent, more powerful, he cannot but take heart again: especially if he consider, that neither of them is without God; limiting the one, the bounds of their temptation; directing the other, in the safeguard of his children. Whereupon it is come to pass, that, though there be many legions of devils, and every one more strong than many legions of men, and more malicious than strong, yet the little flock of God's Church liveth and prospereth. I have ever with me invisible friends and enemies. The consideration of mine enemies shall keep me from security; and make me fearful of doing ought to advantage them. The consideration of my spiritual friends shall comfort me against the terror of the other; shall remedy my solitariness; shall make me wary of doing ought indecently: grieving me rather, that I have ever heretofore made them turn away their eyes for shame of that, whereof I have not been ashamed; that I have no more enjoyed their society; that I have been no more affected with their presence. What though I see them not? I believe them. I were no Christian, if my faith were not as sure as my sense.

XCVII.

There is no word or action, but may be taken with two hands; either with the right-hand of charitable construction, or the sinister interpretation of malice and suspicion: and all things do so succeed,

as they are taken. I have noted evil actions, well taken, pass current for either indifferent or commendable; contrarily, a good speech or action, ill taken, scarce allowed for indifferent; an indifferent one, censured for evil; an evil one, for notorious: so, favour makes virtues of vices; and suspicion makes virtues faults, and faults crimes. Of the two, I would rather my right-hand should offend. It is always safer offending on the better part. To construe an evil act well, is but a pleasing and profitable deceit of myself: but to misconstrue a good thing, is a treble wrong; to myself, the action, the author. If no good sense can be made of a deed or speech, let the blame light upon the author: if a good interpretation may be given, and I choose a worse, let me be as much censured of others, as that misconceit is punishment to myself.

XCVIII.

I know not how it comes to pass, that the mind of man doth naturally both overprize his own, in comparison of others; and yet contemn and neglect his own, in comparison of what he wants. The remedy of this latter evil is, to compare the good things we have, with the evils which we have not, and others groan under. Thou art in health, and regardest it not: look on the misery of those, which, on their bed of sickness, through extremity of pain and anguish, entreat death to release them. Thou hast clear eye-sight, sound limbs, use of reason; and passest these over with slight respect: think how many there are, which, in their uncomfortable blindness, would give all the world for but one glimpse of light; how many, that deformedly crawl on all-four, after the manner of the most loathsome creatures; how many, that in mad phrensies are worse than brutish, worse than dead: thus thou mightest be, and art not. If I be not happy for the good that I have, I am yet happy for the evils that I might have had, and have escaped. I have deserved the greatest evil: every evil that I miss, is a new mercy.

XCIX.

Earth, which is the basest element, is both our mother, that brought us forth; our stage, that bears us alive; and our grave, wherein, at last, we are entombed: giving to us both our original, our harbour, our sepulchre. She hath yielded her back, to bear thousands of generations; and, at last, opened her mouth to receive them; so swallowing them up, that she still both beareth more, and looks for more; not bewraying any change in herself, while she so oft hath changed her brood and her burden. It is a wonder we can be proud of our parentage, or of ourselves; while we see both the baseness and stability of the earth, whence we came. What difference is there? Living earth treads upon the dead earth; which, afterwards, descends into the grave, as senseless and dead, as the earth that receives it. Not many are proud of their souls; and none, but fools, can be proud of their bodies. While we walk and look upon the earth, we cannot but acknowledge sensible admonitions of humility; and, while we remember them, we cannot for-

get ourselves. It is a mother-like favour of the earth, that she bears and nourishes me; and, at the last, entertains my dead carcase: but it is a greater pleasure, that she teacheth me my vileness by her own, and sends me to heaven for what she wants.

C.

The wicked man carrieth every day a brand to his hell, till his heap be come to the height; then, he ceaseth sinning, and begins his torment: whereas the repentant, in every fit of holy sorrow, carries away a whole faggot from the flame; and quencheth the coals that remain, with his tears. There is no torment for the penitent; no redemption for the obstinate. Safety consisteth not in not sinning, but in repenting: neither is it sin, that condemns, but impenitence. O Lord, I cannot be righteous; let me be repentant.

CI*.

The estate of heavenly and earthly things is plainly represented to us, by the two lights of heaven, which are appointed to rule the night and the day. Earthly things are rightly resembled by the moon, which, being nearest to the region of mortality, is ever in changes, and never looks upon us twice with the same face; and, when it is at the full, is blemished with some dark blots, not capable of any illumination. Heavenly things are figured by the sun, whose great and glorious light is both natural to itself, and ever constant. That other fickle and dim star is fit enough for the night of misery, wherein we live here below. And this firm and beautiful light is but good enough for that day of glory, which the saints live in. If it be good living here, where our sorrows are changed with joys; what is it to live above, where our joys change not? I cannot look upon the body of the sun; and yet I cannot see at all without the light of it: I cannot behold the glory of thy saints, O Lord; yet without the knowledge of it, I am blind. If thy creature be so glorious to us here below; how glorious shall thyself be to us, when we are above the sun! This sun shall not shine upward, where thy glory shineth: the greater light extinguisheth the lesser. O thou Sun of Righteousness, which shalt only shine to me when I am glorified, do thou heat, enlighten, comfort me with the beams of thy presence, till I be glorified. Amen.

* The author seems, by oversight, to have introduced a paragraph too many in this Century. One edition, in consequence, gives the No. 86 twice; another repeats the No. 95; and a third the No. 97: but I have thought it best to number the paragraphs regularly through to the end. EDITOR.

HOLY OBSERVATIONS.

ONE BOOK.

BY JOSEPH HALL.

HOLY OBSERVATIONS.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

EDWARD LORD DENNY,

BARON OF WALTHAM,

MY MOST BOUNTIFUL PATRON,

GRACE AND PEACE.

RIGHT HONOURABLE :

THIS advantage a Scholar hath above others, that he cannot be idle; and that he can work without instruments : for the mind, inured to contemplation, will set itself on work, when other occasions fail; and hath no more power not to study, than the eye, which is open, hath, not to see something : in which business it carries about his own library; neither can complain to want books, while it enjoyeth itself.

I could not then neglect the commodity of this plentiful leisure, in my so easy attendance here; but, though besides my course and without the help of others' writings, must needs busy myself in such thoughts, as I have here given account of to your Lordship : such, as I hope shall not be unprofitable, nor unwelcome to their patron, to their readers. I send them forth from hence, under your Honourable name; to shew you, that no absence, no employment can make me forget my due respect to your Lordship : to whom, next under my gracious Master, I have deservedly bequeathed myself and my endeavours. Your goodness hath not wont to magnify itself more in giving, than in receiving such like holy presents : the knowledge whereof hath entitled you to more labours of this nature, if I have numbered aright, than any of your Peers. I misdoubt not, either your acceptation, or their use. That God, who hath above all his other favours given your Lordship, even in these careless times, a heart truly religious, give you a happy increase of all his heavenly graces by my unworthy service! To his gracious care I daily commend your Lordship, with my Honourable Lady; wishing you both, all that little joy earth can afford you, and fulness of glory above.

Your Lordship's

Most humbly devoted for ever,

in all duty and observance,

JOSEPH HALL.

Non-such, July 3.

HOLY OBSERVATIONS.

I.

As there is nothing sooner dry, than a tear; so there is nothing sooner out of season, than worldly sorrow: which, if it be fresh and still bleeding, finds some to comfort and pity it; if stale and skinned over with time, is rather entertained with smiles than commiseration: But the sorrow of repentance comes never out of time. All times are alike unto that Eternity, whereto we make our spiritual moans: that which is past, that which is future, are both present with him. It is neither weak nor uncomely, for an old man to weep for the sins of his youth. Those tears can never be shed either too soon, or too late.

II.

Some men live to be their own executors for their good name; which they see (not honestly) buried, before themselves die: some other, of great place and ill desert, part with their good name and breath, at once: there is scarce a vicious man, whose name is not rotten before his carcase. Contrarily, the good man's name is ofttimes heir to his life: either born after the death of the parent, for that envy would not suffer it to come forth before; or, perhaps, so well grown up in his life-time, that the hope thereof is the staff of his age and joy of his death. A wicked man's name may be feared a while: soon after, it is either forgotten or cursed. The good man either sleepeth with his body in peace, or waketh (as his soul) in glory.

III.

Ofttimes those, which shew much valour, while there is equal possibility of life; when they see a present necessity of death, are found most shamefully timorous. Their courage was before grounded upon hope: that, cut off, leaves them at once desperate and cowardly: whereas, men of feebler spirits meet more cheerfully with death; because, though their courage be less, yet their expectation was more.

IV.

I have seldom seen the son of an excellent and famous man, excellent: but, that an ill bird hath an ill egg, is not rare; children possessing, as the bodily diseases, so the vices of their parents. Virtue is not propagated: vice is; even in them, which have it not reigning in themselves. The grain is sown pure; but comes up with chaff and husk. Hast thou a good son? he is God's, not

thine. Is he evil? nothing but his sin is thine. Help, by thy prayers and endeavours, to take away that, which thou hast given him; and to obtain from God that, which thou hast, and canst not give: else, thou mayest name him a possession; but thou shalt find him a loss.

V.

These things be comely and pleasant to see, and worthy of honour from the beholder: a young saint; an old martyr; a religious soldier; a conscionable statesman; a great man courteous; a learned man humble; a silent woman; a child understanding the eye of his parent; a merry companion, without vanity; a friend not changed with honour; a sick man cheerful; a soul departing with comfort and assurance.

VI.

I have oft observed, in merry meetings solemnly made, that somewhat hath fallen out cross; either in the time, or immediately upon it; to season, as I think, our immoderation in desiring or enjoying our friends: and again, events suspected, have proved ever best; God herein blessing our awful submission with good success. In all these human things, indifferency is safe. Let thy doubts be ever equal to thy desires: so thy disappointment shall not be grievous, because thy expectation was not peremptory.

VII.

You shall rarely find a man eminent in sundry faculties of mind, or sundry manuary trades. If his memory be excellent, his fantasy is but dull: if his fancy be busy and quick, his judgment is but shallow: if his judgment be deep, his utterance is harsh. Which also holds no less in the activities of the hand. And if it happen, that one man be qualified with skill of divers trades, and practise this variety, you shall seldom find such one thriving in his estate. With spiritual gifts it is otherwise: which are so chained together, that who excels in one, hath some eminency in more; yea, in all. Look upon faith: she is attended with a bevy of Graces: he, that believes, cannot but have hope; if hope, patience: he, that believes and hopes, must needs find joy in God; if joy, love of God: he, that loves God, cannot but love his brother: his love to God breeds piety and care to please, sorrow for offending, fear to offend; his love to men, fidelity and Christian beneficence. Vices are seldom single; but virtues go ever in troops: they go so thick, that sometimes some are hid in the crowd; which yet are, but appear not. They may be shut out from sight: they cannot be severed.

VIII.

The heaven ever moves; and yet is the place of our rest. Earth ever rests; and yet is the place of our trouble. Outward motion can be no enemy to inward rest; as outward rest may well stand with inward unquietness.

IX.

None live so ill, but they content themselves in somewhat. Even the beggar likes the smell of his dish. It is a rare evil, that hath not something to sweeten it; either in sense, or in hope: otherwise, men would grow desperate, mutinous, envious of others, weary of themselves. The better that thing is, wherein we place our comfort, the happier we live; and the more we love good things, the better they are to us. The worldling's comfort, though it be good to him, because he loves it; yet, because it is not absolutely and eternally good, it fails him: wherein the Christian hath just advantage of him, while he hath all the same causes of joy refined and exalted; besides, more and higher, which the other knows not of. The worldling laughs more; but the Christian is more delighted. These two are easily severed. Thou seest a goodly picture, or a heap of thy gold: thou laughest not; yet thy delight is more, than in a jest that shaketh thy spleen. As grief, so joy, is not less, when it is least expressed.

X.

I have seen the worst natures and most depraved minds, not affecting all sins; but still, some they have condemned in others, and abhorred in themselves. One exclaims on covetousness; yet he can too well abide riotous good-fellowship: another inveighs against drunkenness and excess; not caring how cruel he be in usury and oppression. One cannot endure a rough and quarrellous disposition; yet gives himself over to unclean and lascivious courses: another hates all wrongs, save wrong to God. One is a civil atheist; another, a religious usurer; a third, an honest drunkard; a fourth, an unchaste justicer; a fifth, a chaste quarreller. I know not whether every devil excel in all sins: I am sure some of them have denomination from some sins, more special. Let no man applaud himself, for those sins he wanteth; but condemn himself rather, for that sin he hath. Thou censurest another man's sin; he, thine: God curseth both.

XI.

Gold is the heaviest of all metals: it is no wonder, that the rich man is usually carried downward to his place. It is hard for the soul, clogged with many weights, to ascend to heaven. It must be a strong and nimble soul, that can carry up itself, and such a load; yet Adam and Noah flew up thither, with the double monarchy of the world; the Patriarchs, with much wealth; many holy Kings, with massy crowns and sceptres. The burthen of covetous desires is more heavy to an empty soul, than much treasure to the full. Our affections give poise or lightness to earthly things. Either abate of thy load, if thou find it too pressing; whether by having less, or loving less: or add to thy strength and activity, that thou mayest yet ascend. It is more commendable, by how much more hard, to climb into heaven with a burden.

XII.

A Christian, in all his ways, must have three guides; truth, charity, wisdom: truth, to go before him; charity and wisdom, on either hand. If any of the three be absent, he walks amiss. I have seen some do hurt, by following a truth uncharitably: and others, while they would salve up an error with love, have failed in their wisdom, and offended against justice. A charitable untruth, and an uncharitable truth, an unwise managing of truth or love, are all to be carefully avoided of him, that would go with a right foot in the narrow way.

XIII.

God brought man forth at first, not into a wilderness, but a garden; yet then he expected the best service of him. I never find that he delights in the misery, but in the prosperity of his servants. Cheerfulness pleases him better, than a dejected and dull heaviness of heart. If we can be good with pleasure, he grudgeth not our joy: if not, it is best to stint ourselves; not, for that these comforts are not good, but because our hearts are evil; faulting not their nature, but our use and corruption.

XIV.

The homeliest service, that we do in an honest calling, though it be but to plough or dig, if done in obedience and conscience of God's commandment, is crowned with an ample reward; whereas, the best works for their kind, (preaching, praying, offering evangelical sacrifices,) if without respect of God's injunction and glory, are loaded with curses. God loveth adverbs; and cares not how good, but how well.

XV.

The golden infancy of some hath proceeded to a brazen youth, and ended in a leaden age. All human maturities have their period: only grace hath none. I durst never lay too much hope on the forward beginnings of wit and memory, which have been applauded in children: I knew, they could but attain their vigour; and that, if sooner, no whit the better: for, the earlier is their perfection of wisdom, the longer shall be their witless age. Seasonableness is the best in all these things, which have their ripeness and decay. We can never hope too much of the timely blossoms of grace, whose spring is perpetual, and whose harvest begins with our end.

XVI.

A man must give thanks for somewhat, which he may not pray for. It hath been said of courtiers, that they must receive injuries, and give thanks. God cannot wrong his; but he will cross them: those crosses are beneficial: all benefits challenge thanks: yet I have read, that God's children have, with condition, prayed against them; never, for them. In good things, we pray both for them, and their good use; in evil, for their good use, not themselves: yet we must give thanks for both. For there is no evil of pain,

which God doth not: nothing, that God doth, is not good: no good thing, but is worthy of thanks.

XVII.

One half of the world knows not how the other lives: and, therefore, the better sort pity not the distressed; and the miserable envy not those which fare better; because they know it not. Each man judges of others' conditions, by his own. The worst sort would be too much discontented, if they saw how far more pleasant the life of others is: and, if the better sort, such we call those which are greater, could look down to the infinite miseries of inferiors, it would make them either miserable in compassion, or proud in conceit. It is good, sometimes, for the delicate rich man to look into the poor man's cupboard; and, seeing God in mercy gives him not to know their sorrow by experience, to know it yet in speculation: this shall teach him more thanks to God, more mercy to men, more contentment in himself.

XVIII.

Such as a man's prayer is for another, it shall be, in time of his extremity, for himself: for, though he love himself more than others, yet his apprehension of God is alike for both. Such as his prayer is in a former extremity, it shall be also in death: this way we may have experience even of a thing future: if God have been far off from thee in a fit of thine ordinary sickness, fear lest he will not be nearer thee in thy last: what differs that from this, but in time? Correct thy dulness upon former proofs; or else, at last, thy devotion shall want life before thy body.

XIX.

Those, that come to their meat as to a medicine, as Augustin reports of himself, live in an austere and Christian temper; and shall be sure not to joy too much in the creature, nor to abuse themselves: those, that come to their medicine as to meat, shall be sure to live miserably and die soon. To come to meat, if without a gluttonous appetite and palate, is allowed to Christians: to come to meat as to a sacrifice unto the belly, is a most base and brutish idolatry.

XX.

The worst that ever were, even Cain and Judas, have had some fautors, that have honoured them for saints: and the Serpent, that beguiled our first parents, hath, in that name, had divine honour and thanks. Never any man trod so perilous and deep steps, but some have followed, and admired him. Each master of heresy hath found some clients; even he, that taught all men's opinions were true. Again, no man hath been so exquisite, but some have detracted from him; even in those qualities, which have seemed most worthy of wonder to others. A man shall be sure to be backed by some, either in good or evil; and, by some shouldered in both. It is good for a man not to stand upon his abettors, but his quarrel; and not to depend upon others, but himself.

XXI.

We see thousands of creatures die for our use, and never do so much as pity them: why do we think much to die once for God? They are not ours, so much as we are his; nor our pleasure so much to us, as his glory to him: their lives are lost to us; ours, but changed to him.

XXII.

Much ornament is no good sign: painting of the face argues an ill complexion of body, a worse mind. Truth hath a face both honest and comely, and looks best in her own colours. But, above all, Divine Truth is most fair; and most scorneth to borrow beauty of man's wit or tongue: she loveth to come forth in her native grace, like a princely matron; and counts it the greatest indignity, to be dallied with as a wanton strumpet: she looks to command reverence; not pleasure: she would be kneeled to; not laughed at. To prank her up in vain dresses and fashions, or to sport with her in a light and youthful manner, is most abhorring from her nature: they know her not, that give her such entertainment; and shall first know her angry, when they do know her. Again, she would be plain; but not base, not sluttish: she would be clad, not garishly; yet, not in rags: she likes as little to be set out by a base soil, as to seem credited with gay colours. It is no small wisdom, to know her just guise; but more, to follow it: and so to keep the mean, that, while we please her, we discontent not the beholders.

XXIII.

In worldly carriage, so much is a man made of, as he takes upon himself: but such is God's blessing upon true humility, that it still procureth reverence. I never saw Christian less honoured, for a wise neglect of himself. If our dejection proceed from the conscience of our want, it is possible we should be as little esteemed of others, as of ourselves: but if we have true graces, and prize them not at the highest, others shall value both them in us, and us for them; and, with usury, give us that honour, we withheld modestly from ourselves.

XXIV.

He, that takes his full liberty in what he may, shall repent him: how much more in what he should not! I never read of Christian, that repented him of too little worldly delight. The surest course I have still found in all earthly pleasures, To rise with an appetite, and to be satisfied with a little.

XXV.

There is a time, when kings go not forth to warfare: our spiritual war admits no intermission: it knows no night, no winter; abides no peace, no truce. This calls us not into garrison, where we may have ease and respite; but into pitched fields continually: we see our enemies in the face always, and are always seen and assaulted; ever resisting, ever defending; receiving and returning blows. If either we be negligent or weary, we die: what other

hope is there while one fights, and the other stands still? We can never have safety and peace, but in victory. There must our resistance be courageous and constant, where both yielding is death, and all treaties of peace mortal.

XXVI.

Neutrality in things good or evil, is both odious and prejudicial; but in matters of an indifferent nature, is safe and commendable. Herein, taking of parts maketh sides, and breaketh unity. In an unjust cause of separation, he, that favoureth both parts, may, perhaps, have least love of either side; but hath most charity in himself.

XXVII.

Nothing is more absurd, than that epicurean resolution, *Let us eat and drink; to-morrow we shall die:* as if we were made only for the paunch, and lived that we might live; yet there was never any natural man found savour in that meat, which he knew should be his last: whereas they should say, "Let us fast and pray; to-morrow we shall die:" for, to what purpose is the body strengthened, that it may perish; whose greater strength makes our death more violent? No man bestows a costly roof on a ruinous tenement: that man's end is easy and happy, whom death finds with a weak body and a strong soul.

XXVIII.

Sometime, even things, in themselves naturally good, are to be refused for those, which, being evil, may be an occasion to a greater good. Life is in itself good, and death evil: else David, Elijah, and many excellent Martyrs would not have fled, to hold life and avoid death; nor Hezekiah have prayed for it, nor our Saviour have bidden us to flee for it, nor God promised it to his for a reward: yet, if, in some cases, we hate not life, we love not God, nor our souls. Herein, as much as in any thing, the perverseness of our nature appears, that we wish death or love life, upon wrong causes: we would live for pleasure, or we would die for pain. Job, for his sores; Elijah, for his persecution; Jonah, for his gourd, would presently die, and will needs outface God that it is better for him to die than to live: wherein, we are like to garrison soldiers, that, while they live within safe walls and shew themselves once a day rather for ceremony and pomp than need or danger, like warfare well enough; but, if once called forth to the field, they wish themselves at home.

XXIX.

Not only the least, but the worst is ever in the bottom. What should God do with the dregs of our age? When sin will admit thee his client no longer, then God shall be beholden to thee for thy service. Thus is God dealt with in all other offerings: the worst and least sheaf must be God's tenth: the deformedest or simplest of our children must be God's ministers: the uncleanliest and most careless house must be God's temple: the idlest and sleepiest hours of the day must be reserved for our prayers: the

worst part of our age, for devotion. We would have God give us still of the best; and are ready to murmur, at every little evil he sends us: yet nothing is bad enough for him, of whom we receive all. Nature condemns this inequality; and tells us, that he, which is the Author of Good, should have the best; and he, which gives all, should have his choice.

XXX.

When we go about an evil business, it is strange, how ready the Devil is to set us forward; how careful, that we should want no furtherances: so that, if a man would be lewdly witty, he shall be sure to be furnished with store of profane jests; wherein a loose heart hath double advantage of the conscionable: if he would be voluptuous, he shall want neither objects nor opportunities. The current passage of ill enterprises is so far from giving cause of encouragement, that it should justly fright a man to look back to the author; and to consider, that he therefore goes fast, because the Devil drives him.

XXXI.

In the choice of companions for our conversation, it is good dealing with men of good natures: for, though grace exerciseth her power in bridling nature, yet, since we are still men at the best, some swinge she will have in the most mortified. Austerity, sullenness, or strangeness of disposition, and whatsoever qualities may make a man unsociable, cleave faster to our nature, than those, which are morally evil. True Christian love may be separated from acquaintance, and acquaintance from entireness: these are not qualities to hinder our love, but our familiarity.

XXXII.

Ignorance, as it makes bold, intruding men carelessly into unknown dangers; so also it makes men ofttimes causelessly fearful. Herod feared Christ's coming, because he mistook it: if that tyrant had known the manner of his spiritual regiment, he had spared both his own fright and the blood of other. And, hence it is, that we fear death; because we are not acquainted with the virtue of it. Nothing, but innocency and knowledge, can give sound confidence to the heart.

XXXIII.

Where are divers opinions, they may be all false: there can be but one true: and that one truth ofttimes must be fetched by piece-meal out of divers branches of contrary opinions. For, it falls out not seldom, that truth is, through ignorance or rash vehemency, scattered into sundry parts; and, like to a little silver melted amongst the ruins of a burnt house, must be tried out from heaps of much superfluous ashes. There is much pains in the search of it; much skill in finding it: the value of it once found, requites the cost of both.

XXXIV.

Affectation of superfluity is, in all things, a sign of weakness: as, in words, he, that useth circumlocutions to express himself, shews want of memory and want of proper speech; and much talk

argues a brain feeble and distempered. What good can any earthly thing yield us, beside his use? and what is it, but vanity; to affect that, which doth us no good? and what use is in that, which is superfluous? It is a great skill, to know what is enough; and great wisdom, to care for no more.

XXXV.

Good things, which in absence were desired, now offering themselves to our presence, are scarce entertained; or, at least, not with our purposed cheerfulness. Christ's coming to us, and our going to him, are, in our profession, well esteemed, much wished: but, when he singleth us out by a direct message of death, or by some fearful sign giveth likelihood of a present return, we are as much affected with fear, as before with desire. All changes, although to the better, are troublesome for the time, until our settling. There is no remedy hereof, but inward prevention: our mind must change, before our estate be changed.

XXXVI.

Those are greatest enemies to religion, that are not most irreligious. Atheists, though in themselves they be the worst, yet are seldom found hot persecutors of others: whereas those, which in some one fundamental point be heretical, are commonly most violent in oppositions. One hurts by secret infection; the other, by open resistance: one is careless of all truth; the other, vehement for some untruth. An Atheist is worthy of more hatred; a Heretic, of more fear: both, of avoidance.

XXXVII.

Ways, if never used, cannot but be fair; if much used, are made commodiously passable; if before oft used and now seldom, they become deep and dangerous. If the heart be not at all inured to meditation, it findeth no fault with itself; not for that it is innocent, but secure: if often, it findeth comfortable passage for his thoughts: if rarely and with intermission, tedious and troublesome. In things of this nature, we only escape complaint, if we use them either always or never.

XXXVIII.

Our sensual hand holds fast whatsoever delight it apprehendeth: our spiritual hand easily remitteth; because appetite is stronger in us than grace: whence it is, that we so hardly deliver ourselves of earthly pleasures, which we have once entertained; and with such difficulty draw ourselves to a constant course of faith, hope, and spiritual joy, or to the renewed acts of them once intermitted. Age is naturally weak, and youth vigorous: but, in us, the old man is strong; the new, faint and feeble: the fault is not in grace; but in us: faith doth not want strength; but we want faith.

XXXIX.

It is not good in worldly estates, for a man to make himself necessary; for, hereupon, he is both more toiled and more suspected: but in the sacred Commonwealth of the Church, a man cannot be

engaged too deeply by his service. The ambition of spiritual well-doing breeds no danger. He, that doth best, and may worst be spared, is happiest.

XL.

It was a fit comparison of worldly cares, to thorns; for, as they choke the word, so they prick our souls: neither the word can grow up amongst them, nor the heart can rest upon them: neither body nor soul can find ease, while they are within or close to us. Spiritual cares are as sharp; but more profitable: they pain us, but leave the soul better. They break our sleep, but for a sweeter rest: we are not well, but either while we have them, or after we had them. It is as impossible to have spiritual health without these, as to have bodily strength with the other.

XLI.

In temporal good things, it is best to live in doubt; not making full account of that, which we hold in so weak a tenure: in spiritual, with confidence; not fearing that, which is warranted to us by an infallible promise and sure earnest. He lives most contentedly, that is most secure for this world; most resolute for the other.

XLII.

God hath, in nature, given every man inclinations to some one particular calling; which if he follow, he excels; if he cross, he proves a non-proficient and changeable: but all men's natures are equally indisposed to grace, and to the common vocation of Christianity; we are all born Heathens. To do well, nature must, in the first, be observed and followed; in the other, crossed and overcome.

XLIII.

Good-man is a title given to the lowest: whereas, all titles of Greatness, Worship, Honour, are observed and attributed with choice. The speech of the world bewrays their mind; and shews the common estimation of goodness, compared with other qualities. The world, therefore, is an ill herald; and unskilful in the true stiles. It were happy, that goodness were so common; and pity, that it either should not stand with greatness, or not be preferred to it.

XLIV.

Amongst all actions, Satan is ever busiest in the best, and most in the best part of the best: as in the end of prayer; when the heart should close up itself with most comfort. He never fears us, but when we are well employed: and, the more likelihood he sees of our profit, the more is his envy, and labour, to distract us. We should love ourselves as much as he hates us; and therefore strive so much the more towards our good, as his malice striveth to interrupt it. We do nothing, if we contend not, when we are resisted. The good soul is ever in contradiction; denying what is granted, and contending for that which is denied; suspecting when it is gainsaid, and fearing liberty.

XLV.

God forewarns, ere he try; because he would be prevented: Satan steals upon us suddenly by temptations; because he would foil us. If we relent not upon God's premonition, and meet not the lingering pace of his punishments, to forestal them; he punisheth more, by how much his warning was more evident and more large. God's trials must be met, when they come: Satan's must be seen, before they come; and, if we be not armed ere we be assaulted, we shall be foiled ere we can be armed.

XLVI.

It is not good to be continual in denunciation of judgment: the noise, to which we are accustomed, though loud, wakes us not; whereas a less, if unusual, stirreth us. The next way to make threatenings contemned, is, to make them common. It is a profitable rod, that strikes sparingly; and frights somewhat oftener than it smiteth.

XLVII.

Want of use causeth disability; and custom, perfection. Those, that have not used to pray in their closet, cannot pray in public, but coldly and in form. He, that discontinues meditation, shall be long in recovering: whereas the man inured to these exercises, who is not dressed till he have prayed nor hath supped till he have meditated, doth both these well, and with ease. He, that intermits good duties, incurs a double loss: of the blessing, that followeth good; of the faculty of doing it.

XLVIII.

Christianity is both an easy yoke and a hard: hard, to take up; easy to bear, when once taken. The heart requires much labour, ere it can be induced to stoop under it; and finds as much contentment, when it hath stooped. The worldling thinks religion servility: but the Christian knows whose slave he was, till he entered into this service; and that no bondage can be so evil, as freedom from these bonds.

XLIX.

It is a wonder, how full of shifts nature is; ready to turn over all good purposes. If we think of death, she suggests secretly; "Tush, it shall not come yet:" if of judgment for sin; "This concerns not thee; it shall not come at all:" if of heaven, and our labour to reach it; "Trouble not thyself; it will come soon enough alone." Address thyself to pray; "It is yet unseasonable; stay for a better opportunity:" to give alms; "Thou knowest not thine own future wants:" to reprove; "What needest thou thrust thyself into wilful hatred?" Every good action hath his let. He can never be good, that is not resolute.

L.

All Arts are Maids to Divinity: therefore, they both vail to her, and do her service; and she, like a grave Mistress, controls them at pleasure. Natural Philosophy teacheth, that of nothing can be

nothing made; and, that from the privation to the habit is no return: Divinity takes her up for these; and, upon supernatural principles, teaches her a creation, a resurrection. Philosophy teaches us to follow sense, as an infallible guide: Divinity tells her, that faith is of things not seen. Logic teaches us first to discourse, then to resolve; Divinity, to assent without arguing. Civil Law teacheth, that long custom prescribeth; Divinity, that old things are passed: Moral Philosophy, that tallying of injuries is justice; Divinity, that good must be returned for ill: Policy, that better is a mischief than an inconvenience; Divinity, that we may not do evil, that good may ensue. The School is well ordered, while Divinity keeps the Chair: but, if any other skill usurp it, and check their Mistress, there can follow nothing, but confusion and atheism.

LI.

Much difference is to be made, betwixt a revolter and a man trained up in error: a Jew and an Arian both deny Christ's Deity; yet this opinion is not, in both, punished with bodily death. Yea, a revolt to a less error, is more punishable than education in a capital heresy: errors of judgment, though less regarded than errors of practice, yet are more pernicious: but none so deadly as theirs, that once were in the truth. If truth be not sued to, it is dangerous; but if forsaken, desperate.

LII.

It is an ill argument of a good action not well done, when we are glad that it is done: to be affected with the comfort of the conscience of well performing it, is good: but, merely to rejoice that the act is over, is carnal. He never can begin cheerfully, that is glad he hath ended.

LIII.

He, that doth not secret service to God with some delight, doth but counterfeit in public. The truth of any act or passion is then best tried, when it is without witness. Openly, many sinister respects may draw from us a form of religious duties; secretly, nothing but the power of a good conscience. It is to be feared, God hath more true and devout service in Closets, than in Churches.

LIV.

Words and diseases grow upon us with years. In age, we talk much, because we have seen much, and soon after shall cease talking for ever: we are most diseased, because nature is weakest; and death, which is near, must have harbingers. Such is the old age of the world: no marvel, if this last time be full of writing and weak discourse, full of sects and heresies, which are the sicknesses of this great and decayed body.

LV.

The best ground untilled, soonest runs out into rank weeds. Such are God's children: overgrown with security, ere they are aware;

unless they be well exercised, both with God's plough of affliction, and their own industry in meditation. A man of knowledge, that is either negligent or uncorrected, cannot but grow wild and godless.

LVI.

With us, vilest things are most common: but, with God, the best things are most frequently given. Grace, which is the noblest of all God's favours, is unpartially bestowed upon all willing receivers; whereas, nobility of blood and height of place, blessings of an inferior nature, are reserved for few. Herein the Christian follows his Father: his prayers, which are his richest portion, he communicates to all; his substance, according to his ability, to few.

LVII.

God therefore gives, because he hath given; making his former favours, arguments for more: Man therefore shuts his hand, because he hath opened it. There is no such way to procure more from God, as to urge him with what he hath done. All God's blessings are profitable and excellent; not so much in themselves, as that they are inducements to greater.

LVIII.

God's immediate actions are best, at first: the frame of this creation, how exquisite was it under his hand! afterward, blemished by our sin. Man's endeavours are weak in their beginnings, and perfecter by degrees. No science, no device, hath ever been perfect in his cradle; or, at once, hath seen his birth and maturity: of the same nature are those actions, which God worketh mediately by us, according to our measure of receipt. The cause of both is, on the one side the infiniteness of his wisdom and power, which cannot be corrected by any second assays: on the other, our weakness, helping itself by former grounds and trials. He is a happy man, that detracts nothing from God's works, and adds most to his own.

LIX.

The old saying is more common than true; That those, which are in hell, know no other heaven: for this makes the damned perfectly miserable, that, out of their own torment, they see the felicity of the Saints; together with their impossibility of attaining it. Sight, without hope of fruition, is a torment alone. Those, that here might see God and will not, or do see him obscurely and love him not, shall once see him with anguish of soul and not enjoy him.

LX.

Sometimes, evil speeches come from good men, in their unadvisedness; and, sometimes, even the good speeches of men may proceed from an ill spirit. No confession could be better than Satan gave of Christ. It is not enough, to consider what is spoken, or by whom; but whence, and for what. The spirit is oftentimes

tried by the speech: but other times the speech must be examined by the spirit; and the spirit, by the rule of a higher word.

LXI.

Greatness puts high thoughts and big words into a man; whereas, the dejected mind takes, carelessly, what offers itself. Every worldling is base-minded; and, therefore, his thoughts creep still low upon the earth. The Christian both is and knows himself truly great; and, thereupon, mindeth and speaketh of spiritual, immortal, glorious, heavenly things. So much as the soul stoopeth unto earthly thoughts, so much is it unregenerate.

LXII.

Long acquaintance, as it maketh those things, which are evil, to seem less evil; so it makes good things, which at first were unpleasant, delightful. There is no evil of pain, nor no moral good action, which is not harsh at the first. Continuance of evil, which might seem to weary us, is the remedy and abatement of weariness: and the practice of good, as it profiteth, so it pleaseth. He, that is a stranger to good and evil, finds both of them troublesome. God therefore doth well for us, while he exerciseth us with long afflictions: and we do well to ourselves, while we continually busy ourselves in good exercises.

LXIII.

Sometimes, it is well taken by men, that we humble ourselves lower than there is cause: *Thy servant Jacob*, saith that good Patriarch, to his brother, to his inferior. And no less well doth God take these submiss extenuations of ourselves: *I am a worm, and no man: Surely, I am more foolish than a man, and have not the understanding of a man in me.* But I never find, that any man bragged to God, although in a matter of truth, and within the compass of his desert, and was accepted. A man may be too lowly in his dealing with men, even unto contempt: with God, he cannot; but the lower he falleth, the higher is his exaltation.

LXIV.

The soul is fed, as the body; starved with hunger, as the body; requires proportionable diet and necessary variety, as the body. All ages and statures of the soul bear not the same nourishment. There is milk, for spiritual Infants; strong meat, for the grown Christian. The spoon is fit for the one; the knife, for the other. The best Christian is not so grown, that he need to scorn the spoon: but the weak Christian may find a strong food dangerous. How many have been cast away with spiritual surfeits: because, being but new-born, they have swallowed down big morsels of the highest mysteries of godliness, which they never could digest; but, together with them, have cast up their proper nourishment! A man must first know the power of his stomach, ere he know how, with safety and profit, to frequent God's Ordinary.

LXV.

It is very hard for the best man, in a sudden extremity of death, to satisfy himself in apprehending his stay, and reposing his heart upon it: for the soul is so oppressed with sudden terror, that it cannot well command itself, till it have digested an evil. It were miserable for the best Christian, if all his former prayers and meditations did not serve to aid him in his last straits, and meet together in the centre of his extremity; yielding, though not sensible relief, yet secret benefit to the soul: whereas, the worldly man, in this case, having not laid up for this hour, hath no comfort from God, or from others, or from himself.

LXVI.

All external good or evil is measured by sense; neither can we account that either good or ill, which doth neither actually avail, nor hurt us: spiritually, this rule holds not. All our best good is insensible: for all our future (which is the greatest) good, we hold only in hope; and the present favour of God, we have many times, and feel not. The stomach finds the best digestion even in sleep, when we least perceive it: and, while we are most awake, this power worketh in us either to further strength or disease, without our knowledge of what is done within. And, on the other side, that man is most dangerously sick, in whom nature decays without his feeling, without complaint. To know ourselves happy, is good: but, woe were to us Christians, if we could not be happy, and know it not!

LXVII.

There are none, that ever did so much mischief to the Church, as those, that have been excellent in wit and learning. Others may be spiteful enough; but want power to accomplish their malice. An enemy, that hath both strength and craft, is worthy to be feared. None can sin against the Holy Ghost, but those, which have had former illumination. Tell not me what parts a man hath, but what grace: honest sottishness is better than profane eminence.

LXVIII.

The entertainment of all spiritual events must be with fear or hope; but, of all earthly extremities, must be with contempt or derision: for, what is terrible, is worthy of a Christian's contempt; what is pleasant, to be turned over with a scorn. The mean requires a mean affection, betwixt love and hatred. We may not love them, because of their vanity: we may not hate them, because of their necessary use. It is a hard thing to be a wise host, and to fit our entertainment to all comers: which if it be not done, the soul is soon wasted; either for want of customers, or for the misrule of ill guests.

LXIX.

God and man build in a contrary order. Man lays the foundation first; then, adds the walls; the roof, last: God began the roof first; spreading out this vault of heaven, ere he laid the base

of the earth. Our thoughts must follow the order of his workmanship. Heaven must be minded first; earth, afterward: and, so much more, as it is seen more. Our meditation must herein follow our sense: a few miles give bounds to our view of earth; whereas, we may near see half the heaven at once. He, that thinks most, both of that which is most seen, and of that which is not seen at all, is happiest.

LXX.

I have ever noted it a true sign of a false heart, To be scrupulous and nice in small matters, negligent in the main: whereas, the good soul is still curious in substantial points, and not careless in things of an inferior nature; accounting no duty so small as to be neglected, and no care great enough for principal duties; not so tything mint and cummin, that he should forget justice and judgment; nor yet so regarding judgment and justice, that he should contemn mint and cummin. He, that thus misplaces his conscience, will be found either hypocritical or superstitious.

LXXI.

It argues the world full of atheists, that those offences, which may impeach human society, are entertained with an answerable hatred and rigour; those, which do immediately wrong the supreme majesty of God, are turned over with scarce so much as dislike. If we conversed with God as we do with men, his right would be at least as precious to us as our own. All, that converse not with God, are without God. Not only those that are against God, but those that are without God, are atheists. We may be too charitable: I fear not to say, that these our last times abound with honest atheists.

LXXII.

The best thing corrupted, is worst: an ill man is the worst of all creatures; an ill Christian, the worst of all men; an ill professor, the worst of all Christians; an ill minister, the worst of all professors.

LXXIII.

Naturally, life is before death; and death is only a privation of life: spiritually, it is contrary. As Paul saith of the grain, so may we of man in the business of regeneration: he must die before he can live: yet this death presupposes a life, that was once, and should be. God chuses to have the difficultest, first: we must be content with the pain of dying, ere we feel the comfort of life. As we die to nature, ere we live in glory; so we must die to sin, ere we can live to grace.

LXXIV.

Death did not first strike Adam, the first sinful man; nor Cain, the first hypocrite; but Abel, the innocent and righteous. The first soul, that met with death, overcame death: the first soul, that parted from earth, went to heaven. Death argues not displeasure;

because he, whom God loved best, dies first; and the murderer is punished with living.

LXXV.

The lives of most are mis-spent, only for want of a certain end of their actions: wherein they do as unwise archers, shoot away their arrows, they know not at what mark: they live only out of the present; not directing themselves and their proceedings to one universal scope: whence they alter upon all change of occasions, and never reach any perfection; neither can do other but continue in uncertainty, and end in discomfort. Others aim at one certain mark; but a wrong one. Some, though fewer, level at the right end; but amiss. To live without one main and common end, is idleness and folly: to live to a false end, is deceit and loss: true Christian wisdom, both shews the end, and finds the way. And, as cunning politicians have many plots to compass one and the same design, by a determined succession: so the wise Christian, failing in the means; yet still fetcheth about to his steady end, with a constant change of endeavours. Such an one only lives to purpose; and, at last, repents not, that he hath lived.

LXXVI.

The shipwreck of a good conscience, is the casting away of all other excellencies. It is no rare thing, to note the soul of a wilful sinner stripped of all her graces; and, by degrees, exposed to shame: so those, whom we have known admired, have fallen to be level with their fellows; and, from thence, beneath them, to a mediocrity; and, afterwards, to sottishness and contempt, below the vulgar. Since they have cast away the best, it is just with God to take away the worst; and to cast off them in lesser regards, which have rejected him in greater.

LXXVII.

It hath ever been counted more noble and successful, to set upon an open enemy in his own home, than to expect till he set upon us, while we make only a defensive war. This rule serves us for our last enemy, death: whence that old demand of Epicure is easily answered, Whether it be better death should come to us, or that we should meet him in the way: meet him in our minds, ere he seize upon our bodies. Our cowardliness, our unpreparation, is his advantage: whereas, true boldness in confronting him dismays and weakens his forces. Happy is that soul, that can send out the scouts of his thoughts beforehand, to discover the power of death afar off; and then can resolutely encounter him, at unawares, upon advantage: such an one lives with security, dies with comfort.

LXXVIII.

Many a man sends others to heaven; and yet goes to hell himself: and not few, having drawn others to hell; yet themselves return, by a late repentance, to life. In a good action, it is not

good to search too deeply into the intention of the agent; but, in silence, to make our best benefit of the work: in an evil, it is not safe to regard the quality of the person, or his success; but to consider the action abstracted from all circumstances, in his own kind. So we shall neither neglect good deeds, because they speed not well in some hands; nor affect a prosperous evil.

LXXIX.

God doth some singular actions, wherein we cannot imitate him; some, wherein we may not; most, wherein he may and would fain be followed. He fetcheth good out of evil; so may we turn our own and others' sins to private or public good: we may not do evil for a good use; but we must use our evil once done, to good. I hope I shall not offend, to say, That the good use, which is made of sins, is as gainful to God; as that, which arises from good actions. Happy is that man, that can use either his good well, or his evil.

LXXX.

There is no difference betwixt anger and madness, but continuance: for, raging anger is a short madness: what else argues the shaking of the hands and lips: paleness, or redness, or swelling of the face; glaring of the eyes; stammering of the tongue; stamping with the feet; unsteady motions of the whole body; rash actions, which we remember not to have done; distracted and wild speeches? and madness again is nothing but a continued rage; yea, some madness rageth not: such a mild madness is more tolerable, than frequent and furious anger.

LXXXI.

Those, that would keep state, must keep aloof off; especially if their qualities be not answerable in height to their place: for many great persons are like a well-wrought picture upon a coarse cloth; which, afar off shews fair, but near-hand the roundness of the thread mars the good workmanship. Concealment of gifts, after some one commended act, is the best way to admiration and secret honour: but he, that would profit, must vent himself oft and liberally; and shew what he is, without all private regard. As, therefore, many times, honour follows modesty unlooked for; so, contrarily, a man may shew no less pride in silence and obscurity, than others, which speak and write for glory. And that other pride is so much the worse, as it is more unprofitable: for, whereas those, which put forth their gifts, benefit others while they seek themselves; these are so wholly devoted to themselves, that their secrecy doth no good to others.

LXXXII.

Such as a man's delights and cares are in health, such are both his thoughts and speeches commonly on his death-bed: the proud man talks of his fair suits; the glutton, of his dishes; the wanton, of his beastliness; the religious man, of heavenly things.

The tongue will hardly leave that, to which the heart is inured. If we would have good motions to visit us while we are sick, we must send for them familiarly in our health.

LXXXIII.

He is a rare man, that hath not some kind of madness reigning in him: one, a dull madness of melancholy; another, a conceited madness of pride; another, a superstitious madness of false devotion; a fourth, of ambition or covetousness; a fifth, the furious madness of anger; a sixth, the laughing madness of extreme mirth; a seventh, a drunken madness; an eighth, of outrageous lust; a ninth, the learned madness of curiosity; a tenth, the worst madness of profaneness and atheism. It is as hard, to reckon up all kinds of madnesses, as of dispositions. Some are more noted and punished than others; so that, the madman in one kind as much condemns another, as the sober man condemns him. Only that man is both good, and wise, and happy, that is free from all kinds of frenzy.

LXXXIV.

There be some honest errors, wherewith I never found that God was offended: that a husband should think his own wife comely, although ill-favoured in the eyes of others; that a man should think more meanly of his own good parts, than of weaker in others; to give charitable, though mistaken, constructions of doubtful actions and persons; which are the effects of natural affection, humility, love; were never censured by God: herein alone we err, if we err not.

LXXXV.

No marvel, if the worldling escape earthly afflictions. God corrects him not, because he loves him not. He is base born and begot. God will not do him the favour to whip him. The world afflicts him not, because he loves him: for each man is indulgent to his own. God uses not the rod, where he means to use the sword. The pillory or scourge is for those malefactors, which shall escape execution.

LXXXVI.

Weak stomachs, which cannot digest large meals, feed oft and little. For our souls, that, which we want in measure, we must supply in frequence. We can never fully enough comprehend in our thoughts the joys of heaven, the meritorious sufferings of Christ, the terrors of the second death: therefore, we must meditate of them often.

LXXXVII.

The same thoughts do commonly meet us in the same places; as if we had left them there, till our return: for that the mind doth secretly frame to itself memorative heads, whereby it recals easily the same conceits. It is best to employ our mind there, where it is most fixed. Our devotion is so dull, it cannot have too many advantages.

LXXXVIII.

I find but one example in all Scripture, of any bodily cure which our Saviour wrought by degrees: only the blind man, whose weak faith craved help by others, not by himself, saw men first like trees, then in their true shape: all other miraculous cures of Christ were done at once, and perfect at first. Contrarily, I find but one example of a soul fully healed, that is, sanctified and glorified, both in a day; all other, by degrees and leisure. The steps of grace are soft and short. Those external miracles, he wrought immediately by himself; and, therefore, no marvel, if they were absolute, like their Author. The miraculous work of our regeneration, he works together with us: he giveth it efficacy; we give it imperfection.

OCCASIONAL MEDITATIONS,

BY

JOS. EXON.

SET FORTH BY R. H.

JOSEPHI HALLI

EXONIENSIS EPISCOPI,

Αὐτοσχεδίασματα:

VEL

MEDITATIUNCULÆ SUBITANEÆ,

èque re natâ subortæ.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE, MY VERY GOOD LORD,

JAMES LORD VISCOUNT DONCASTER.

RIGHT HONOURABLE:

FINDING these papers, amongst others, lying aside in my father's Study, whereof I conceived good use might be made, in regard of that spiritual advantage, which they promised; I obtained of him good leave to send them abroad: whereto he professed himself the more easily induced, for that his continual and weighty employments in this large and busy Diocese will not yet afford him leisure, to dispatch those his other fixed Meditations on the History of the New Testament.

In the mean time, the expressions of these voluntary and sudden thoughts of his shall testify, how fruitfully he is wont to improve those short ends of time, which are stolen from his more important avocations; and, unless my hopes fail me, the pattern of them may prove not a little beneficial to others.

Holy minds have been ever wont to look through these bodily objects, at spiritual and heavenly. So Sulpitius reports of St. Martin, that, seeing a sheep newly shorn, he could say, "Lo, here is one, that hath performed that command in the Gospel; having two coats, she hath given away one:" and, seeing a hogherd freezing in a thin suit of skins, "Lo," said he, "there is Adam cast out of paradise:" and seeing a meadow part rooted up; part whole, but eaten down; and part flourishing; he said, "The first was the state of fornication, the second of marriage, the third of virginity." But what do I seek any other author, than the Lord of Life himself? who, upon the drawing of water from the well of Shilo on the day of the great Hosanna, took occasion to speak of those living waters, which should flow from every true believer; John vii. 38: *and, upon occasion of a bodily feast,* Luke xiv. *entered into that divine discourse of God's gracious invitation of us to those spiritual viands of grace and glory.*

Thus, methinks, we should still be climbing up in our thoughts, from earth to heaven; and suffer no object to cross us in our way, without some spiritual use and application. Thus it pleased my Reverend Father, sometimes to recreate himself: whose manner it hath been, when any of these meditations have unsought offered themselves unto him, presently to set them down; a course, which I wish had been also taken in many more, which might no doubt have been very profitable.

These, as they are, I send forth under your Honourable Name; out of those many respects, which are, in an hereditary right, due to your Lordship, as being apparent heir to those two singular patrons of my justly-Reverenced Father: the eminent virtue of which your noble parents, in a gracious succession yields to your Lordship a happy example, which to follow is the only way to true honour. For the daily increase whereof here, and the everlasting crown of it hereafter, his prayers to God shall not be wanting, who desires to be accounted

Your Lordship's devoted,

in all humble observance,

ROBERT HALL.

INCLYTO HEROI:

Dº. JACOBO, COMITI CARLEOLENSI;

REGIÆ MAT^TI. AB INTIMIORE ET CONSILIO, ET CUBICULO:

FAUSTA QUÆQUE.

QUÆ Anglicè pridem edita, sub auspiciis nobilissimi Doncastrii tui lucem salutárunt, quin modò Latina tuum, Illustris Heros, ambire ament patrocinium? Juris illa publici fecerat, me parùm refragante, filius: ista non erubesco me patrem vocent. Nimirùm, hóc ætatis, ubi plærique senum non immeritò, veterum studiorum, desuetæque diu linguæ, oblivionem causari solemus; nemo mihi vitio verterit rejuvenescere quodammodò jam serò animum, Romæque ac Athenarum etiamnùm velle recèns meminisse.

Illud verò cumprimis mihi cordi est, linguas exteras, mea qualiacunque in suos traduxisse idiotismos: nempe, quò meis fruuntur plures, eò me ditiorem fælicioremque sentio. Siquid mihi excíderit boni, omnium esto. Gratulor idcirco mihi, D. Jacometi, aliorumque fidorum interpretum, calamos benevolos. Fas tamen sit dicere, et Latinè et Gallicè ab aliis aliquibus versa quædam mea, non nimiùm mihi placuisse: qui nativo quidem villo mea prodire mavelim incuriosiùs; quàm serico alterius haud benè interim concinnato, malè induta.

Ne forte queri possit hoc idem ista senii mei propages, eò magis chara quò sera magis, ipse Latio donare volui familiares hasce non inutilium cogitationum minutias; jussique tuo nomine, exteris quibusque jam diu celeberrimo, superbire. Tu, pro eâ, quâ omnes exuperare soles, mirâ comitate suavitateque morum, serenus excipies hanc officii mei observantiæque strenam qualemcunque.

Quidni verò hoc mihi ausim fidenter pollicéri? Diu est, ex quo novit orbis hic noster, quàm ego me totum tibi sceroque tuo præclarissimo, Heróum corculo, Comiti Norvicensi, ab ineunte juventute, debucrim voverimque.

Idem utrique vestrùm splendidissimæque utriusque familiæ, quàmlibet loco dissitissimus, et affectu intimus, et officiis quibusque divinctissimus usque permanscro

JOS. EXON.

E Palatio nostro Exoniensi;
Novemb. 29, 1634.

THE PROEM.

I HAVE heedlessly lost, I confess, many good thoughts: these few my paper hath preserved from vanishing; the example whereof may, perhaps, be more useful than the matter.

Our active soul can no more forbear to think, than the eye can chuse but see when it is open. Would we but keep our wholesome notions together, mankind would be too rich. To do well, no object should pass us, without use. Every thing, that we see, reads us new lectures of wisdom and piety. It is a shame for a man, to be ignorant or godless, under so many tutors.

For me, I would not wish to live longer, than I shall be better for my eyes: and have thought it thankworthy, thus to teach weak minds, how to improve their thoughts, upon all like occasions. And, if ever these lines shall come to the public view, I desire and charge my reader, whosoever he be, to make me and himself so happy, as to take out my lesson; and to learn how to read God's great book, by mine.

PROLOQUIUM AD LECTOREM.

OCCURRERUNT mihi ultrò meditatiunculæ istæ: ego illas non solicitavi importuniùs; imò, ne accersivi quidem: sponte oblatas admisi non illibenter, nec morosiùs repuli; admissas excepi familiariter; exceptas, denique, permisi prodire in vulgus, non curâ et studio comptas, non ornatas elegantiùs, sed nativâ simplicitate indutas, procul et sordibus et fastu.

Mille mihi, fateor, hujusmodi cogitationes, quæ mea fuit incuria, neglectæ exciderunt evanueruntque: istas ego chartulæ meæ servandas dedi, ne itidem perirent. Meo priùs idiomate editas donavi Latinitate, ut pluribus prodesse possint, quæ meis placuissent. Quarum fortè exemplum, re fuerit ipsâ utilius.

Agilis quippe est hæc anima humana; neque minùs possibile est ut non cogitet, quàm ut nihil quicquam videat oculus apertus. Si curæ nobis foret notiones quasque salutares adservare studiosiùs, nimis profectò ditesceret genus humanum. Nobis certè si probè consultum voluerimus, nullum quamlibet exile subitumve objectum prætervolaverit, absque suo et usu et beneficio. Quicquid uspiam videmus prælegit nobis nova et prudentiæ documenta et pietatis. Turpe est homini, ut, sub tot præceptoribus, parùm sapiat.

Quod ad me, nollem equidem superesse diutiùs, quàm me oculi mei aliquid doceant: jam verò curæ pretium duxi, exemplo præire aliis, ut infirmiores, si qui sint, animi, inde discant cogitationibus quibusque obviis meliorescere. Lectorem igitur meum, quisquis fuerit, exoratum volo, ut, hâc ratione, et me et seipsum beare velit; perdiscatque, ex hoc meo libellulo, magnum Dei volumen (mundum intelligo) utiliter perlegere.

OCCASIONAL MEDITATIONS.

On the sight of the heavens moving. I. *Conspecto cœli motu.*

I CAN see nothing stand still, but the earth: all other things are in motion. Even the water, which makes up one globe with the earth, is ever stirring in ebbs and flowings; the clouds, over my head; the heavens, above the clouds: these, as they are most conspicuous, so are they the greatest patterns of perpetual action.

What should we rather imitate, than this glorious frame? O God, when we pray, that thy will may be done in earth as it is in heaven, though we mean chiefly the inhabitants of that place; yet we do not exclude the very place of those blessed inhabitants, from being an example of our obedience. The motion of this thy heaven is perpetual; so let me ever be acting somewhat of thy will: the motion of thy heaven is regular, never swerving from the due points; so let me ever walk steadily in the ways of thy will, without all diversions or variations from the line of thy Law. In the motion of thy heaven, though some stars have their own peculiar and contrary courses; yet all yield themselves to the sway of the main circumvolution of that first mover: so, though I have a will of mine own; yet let me give myself over, to be ruled and ordered by thy Spirit, in all my ways. Man is a little world: my soul is heaven; my body is earth: if this earth be dull and

NIHIL quicquam præter terram quiescere video: cætera quæque motu perpetuo agitantur. Etiam et aqua illa, quæ unum cum terrâ globum constituit, continuo fluxu et refluxu reciprocatur: nubes, supra caput volitantes; supra nubes, cœlum ac sydera; sic aguntur perpetim: hæc, uti præ cæteris eminent conspicua, ita nobis exempla præferunt perpetuæ activitatis.

Quid tandem æmulemur nos æquè, ac speciosam hanc mundi machinam? O Deus, quoties precamur supplices, ut fiat voluntas tua in terris sicut in cœlo, tametsi præcipuè intelligamus loci illius incolas beatissimos; non tamen excludimus locum ipsum cælitum illorum receptaculum, quo minùs exemplo nobis sit veræ perfectæque obedientiæ. Circumvolutio cœli tui perpetua est et perennis; itidem faxis, ô Deus, ut nunquam non in aliquid ferar voluntati tuæ consentaneum: motus cœli tui regularis est, nunquam à constitutis sibi terminis, vel minimum divaricans; ita faxis, in viâ præceptionum tuarum, absque omni diversione aberrationeve à lineâ Legis tuæ, constanter usque obambulem. In hoc cœlestium motu, quamvis stellæ quædam peculiares sibi quosdam et contrarios motus sortiantur; singulæ tamen rapidæ circumgyrationi primi motoris se ultrò subjiciunt: itidem et ego, tametsi voluntatem habeo propriam liberamque; faxis, tamen,

fixed; yet, O God, let my heaven, like unto thine, move perpetually, regularly, and in a constant subjection to thy Holy Ghost.

ut in omnibus vitæ viis, me totum dedam à Spiritu tuo dirigendum gubernandumque. Homo microcosmus est: anima cœlum; corpus terra est: si hæc terra mea fixa maneat inersque; faxis tamen, ô Deus, ut cœlum hoc meum, sicut et tuum, jugiter atque ordinatè moveatur, Spirituique tuo, velut primo motori, intelligentiæve sapientissimæ potentissimæque, perpetuò subjiciatur.

On the sight of a dial.

If the sun did not shine upon this dial, nobody would look at it: in a cloudy day, it stands like an useless post, unheeded, unregarded; but, when once those beams break forth, every passenger runs to it, and gazes on it.

O God, while thou hidest thy countenance from me, methinks, all thy creatures pass by me with a willing neglect. Indeed, what am I without thee? And if thou have drawn in me some lines and notes of able endowments; yet, if I be not actuated by thy grace, all is, in respect of use, no better than nothing: but, when thou renewest the light of thy loving countenance upon me, I find a sensible and happy change of condition: methinks all things look upon me with such cheer and observance, as if they meant to make good that word of thine, *Those, that honour me, I will honour:* now, every line and figure, which it hath pleased thee to work in me, serve for useful and profitable direction. O Lord, all the glory is thine. Give thou me light: I shall give others in-

II. *Ad conspectum horarii scioterici.*

Si sol radiis suis non illustraret horarium istud, nemo illud profectò intueretur: nubilum ubi cœlum est, negligitur hoc planè, statque velut inutilis aridusque truncus; ubi, verò, radii illi paulò clariùs emicuerint, accurrit viator omnis, oculosque illò conjicit intentiùs.

O Deus, quando tu vultum à me tuum absconderis, creaturæ tuæ omnes, ut mihi quidem videtur, prætereundo me lubenter negligunt. Certè verò, quid sum ego sine te? Si tu lineolas in me quasdam duxeris, insculpserisque mihi quædam non contemnendarum facultatum specimina; si, tamen, efficaci gratiâ tuâ, ista parùm in actum redigantur, omnia hæc, quoad usum utilitatemque, vix quid, sanè nihilo meliora sunt: ubi, verò, lumen benignissimi vultûs tui mihi tandem reddere dignatus fueris, certam fœlicemque conditionis meæ vicissitudinem illico persentisco: omnia me nunc ità alacriter officiosèque contuentur, quasi propositum iis foret adserere verbum illud tuum, *Honorantes me honorabo:* nunc, linea omnis ac figura, quam mihi inscribere volueris, utili alicui sa-

formation: both of us shall give thee praise.

lutarique directioni inservit. O Domine, gloria tibi redundat tota. Da tu mihi lumen: ego aliis documentum subministrabo: utrique tibi laudem tribuemus.

On the sight of an eclipse of the sun. III. *Visâ eclipsi solis.*

LIGHT is an ordinary and familiar blessing; yet, so dear to us, that one hour's interception of it sets all the world in a wonder. The two great luminaries of heaven, as they impart light to us, so they withdraw light from each other: the sun darkens the full moon, in casting the shadow of the earth upon her opposed face: the new moon repays this blemish to the sun, in the interposing of her dark body, betwixt our eyes and his glorious beams: the earth is troubled at both.

O God, if we be so afflicted with the obscuring of some piece of one of thy created lights, for an hour or two; what a confusion shall it be, that thou, who art the God of these lights, in comparison of whom they are mere darkness, shalt hide thy face from thy creature for ever! O thou, that art the Sun of Righteousness, if every of my sins cloud thy face; yet, let not my grievous sins eclipse thy light. Thou shinest always, though I do not see thee; but, Oh, never suffer my sins so to darken thy visage, that I cannot see thee.

LUX quidem ordinarium est ac familiare beneficium; ita, tamen, nobis charum, ut illius, vel pro unius horulæ spatio, interceptio mundum totum attonitum penèque exanimem reddere soleat. Duo magna cœli luminaria, uti lumen nobis ambo impertiunt, ita et idem sibi mutuò subtrahunt: lunam obscurat sol, terræ umbram in oppositam ejus faciem projiciendo: vicem hanc rursum soli rependit luna, opaco corpore suo, inter oculos nostros et gloriosos ipsius radios, trajecto: utroque non parùm afficitur terra.

O Deus, si nos ita affligimur obfuscatione tantillâ partis alicujus creatorum à te luminarium, vel brevi horulæ unius alteriusve momento; quæ tandem oborietur confusio, ubi tu, qui horum luminarium Deus es, et præ quo meræ sunt ista tenebræ, faciem tuam à creaturâ tuâ æternùm subduxeris! O tu, qui Sol es Justitiæ, si peccatorum meorum unumquodque faciem tuam obnubilaverit; noli, tamen, sinere ut vel gravissimum delictorum meorum luminis tui deliquium mihi unquam inducat. Tu splendes semper, cum te nullus videam; noli permittere sic ut obscurent vultum tuum peccata mea, ut te videre omnino non possim.

On the sight of a gliding star. IV. *Conspectâ stellâ cadente.*

HOW easily is our sight deceived!

QUAM facilè decipitur visus nos-

how easily doth our sight deceive us! We saw no difference betwixt this star and the rest: the light seemed alike; both while it stood, and while it fell. Now, we know it was no other, than a base slimy meteor, gilded with the sun-beams: and now our foot can tread upon that, which ere while our eye admired. Had it been a star, it had still and ever shined: now, the very fall argues it a false and elementary apparition.

Thus our charity doth and must mislead us, in our spiritual judgments. If we see men exalted in their Christian profession, fixed in the upper region of the Church, shining with appearances of grace; we may not think them other, than stars in this lower firmament: but, if they fall from their holy station, and embrace the present world, whether in judgment or practice renouncing the truth and power of godliness; now, we may boldly say, they had never any true light in them, and were no other than a glittering composition of pride and hypocrisy.

O God, if my charity make me apt to be deceived by others, let me be sure not to deceive myself. Perhaps, some of these apostatizing stars have thought themselves true: let their miscarriage make me heedful: let the inward light of thy grace more convince my truth to myself, than my outward profession can represent me glorious to others.

ter! sed et quam facilè nos decipit visus! Nihil nos vidimus discriminis inter stellam hanc et reliquas: par utriusque lumen visum est; stantis, cadentisque. Nunc verò, novimus hanc nihil fuisse aliud, nisi vile quoddam limosumque meteorum, solaribus radiis parumper deauratum: jam igitur pes noster calcat, quod miratus est pridem oculus. Si stella fuisset, etiamnum et usque micuisset: nunc, vel casus iste satis arguit falsum et elementare spectamentum.

Ita et charitas nostra decipere nos et solet et fortè etiam debet, in spiritualibus rerum alienarum judiciis. Si quem videmus Christianâ professione elevatum eminentiùs, in supremâ Ecclesiæ regione fixum, specie quâdam gratiæ clarè splendentem; non alium fas est hunc judicare, quàm stellam veram in sublunari istoc firmamento conspicuam: quòd, si iste demùm à statione sanctâ penitùs exciderit, præsens seculum amplexus, sive quoad judicium sive praxin veritati renuntiaverit, virtutemque pietatis omnem abnegaverit; nunc, fidenter dicere possumus, veram hunc in se lucem parùm habuisse, nihilque fuisse aliud nisi gloriosulum quiddam ex hypocrisi et superbiâ conflatum.

O Deus, si charitas me mea aliorum deceptioni exposuerit, faxis ne ego me fallam ipse. Fortassis, istarum apostaticarum stellarum aliquæ se veras arbitratæ sunt aliquando: cautum ac solicitum me reddat horum casus: internum gratiæ tuæ lumen veracitatem meam magis evincat mihiipsi, quàm externa quævis professio me aliis gloriosum representare poterit.

On a fair prospect.

WHAT a pleasing variety is here of towns, rivers, hills, dales, woods, meadows; each of them striving to set forth the other, and all of them to delight the eye! So as this is no other, than a natural and real landscape, drawn by that almighty and skilful hand, in this table of the earth, for the pleasure of our view. No other creature, besides man, is capable to apprehend this beauty: I shall do wrong to him, that brought me hither; if I do not feed my eyes, and praise my Maker. It is the intermixture, and change, of these objects, that yields this contentment both to the sense and mind.

But there is a sight, O my soul, that, without all variety, offers thee a truer and fuller delight; even this heaven, above thee. All thy other prospects end in this. This glorious circumference bounds, and circles, and enlightens all that thine eye can see: whether thou look upward, or forward, or about thee, there thine eye alights; there let thy thoughts be fixed. One inch of this lightsome firmament hath more beauty in it, than the whole face of the earth: and yet, this is but the floor of that goodly fabric; the outward curtain of that glorious tabernacle. Couldest thou but (Oh that thou couldest!) look within that veil, how shouldest thou be ravished with that blissful sight! There, in that incomprehensible light, thou shouldest see him, whom none can see and not be blessed: thou shouldest see millions of pure and majesti-

V. *Viso luculento quodam prospectu.*

Quàm jucunda se heic exhibet varietas oppidorum, fluminum, montium, vallium, nemorum, pascuorum; quorum singula ornare sese mutuò, omnia verò oculum delectare contendunt! Ita ut istoc spectaculum non aliud quidem videatur, quàm vera ac nativa pictura chorographica, in hâc terræ tabulâ, oblectando spectatoris oculo, à dædalâ omnipotentis manu concinnata. Nulla creaturarum omnium, præter hominem solum, capax est pulchritudinis hujusce discernendæ: injurius planè ero illi, qui me huc adduxerit; nisi et oculos mihi unà pascam, et laudem Conditorem. Vicissitudo quædam est, sed et mistura objectorum, quæ voluptate hâc tantâ sive sensum sive animum afficit.

Est tamen spectaculum quoddam, quod tibi, ô mea anima, absque omni varietate, solidiorem plenioremque delectationem offert; cœlum hoc intelligo, quod supra te cernitur. Prospectus alii omnes tui in hoc desinunt. Splendidissimus hujus ambitus continet, definit, illuminat quicquid oculus tuus poterit contemplari: sursum ne spectes, deorsumve, aut circumcirca, determinatur illo visus; sed et inibi cogitationes tuæ fixæ acquiescant. Lucidissimi hujus firmamenti vel palmus unus plus in se venustatis habet, quàm tota terræ facies: et tamen, hoc totum nihil aliud est quàm pulcherrimæ illius fabricæ pavimentum imum; nitidissimi tabernaculi velum extimum. Possesne (ô si posses!) intra velum illud prospicere, quali te illico beatificâ visione illâ raptum ecstasi sentires! In illâ luce incomprehensibili, videres eum,

eal angels, of holy and glorified souls: there, amongst thy Father's many mansions, thou shouldest take happy notice of thine own. Oh the best of earth, now vile and contemptible! Come down no more, O my soul, after thou hast once pitched upon this heavenly glory; or, if this flesh force thy descent, be unquiet, till thou art let loose to immortality.

quem nemo non beatus videre unquam potest: multas purissimorum potentissimorumque angelorum, sanctarumque et glorificatarum animarum myriadas aspiceres: ibique, inter innumeras Paternæ domûs tuæ mansiones, tuam tibi fœliciter designatam cerneres. O vel optimam terræ partem, vilem modò et despicabilem! Noli! ô, noli descendere deinceps, animula mea, ubi semel cœlestem hanc gloriam perlustraveris; aut, si caro ista descendere te vel invitam coegerit, inquieta esto, dum soluta fueris ut liberè fruaris immortalitate.

On the frame of a globe casually broken.

It is hard to say, whether is the greater, man's art or impotence. He, that cannot make one spire of grass, or corn of sand, will yet be framing of worlds: he can imitate all things, who can make nothing. Here is a great world in a little room, by the skill of the workman; but in less room, by mis-accident. Had he seen this, who, upon the view of Plato's Book of Commonwealth eaten with mice, presaged the fatal miscarriage of the public state, he would sure have construed this casualty as ominous.

Whatever become of the material world, whose decay might seem no less to stand with Divine Providence than this microcosm of individual man, sure I am, the frame of the moral world is and must be disjointed in the last times. Men do and will fall from evil to worse. He, that hath made all times, hath told

VI. *De globi fabricâ casu confractâ.*

Dici certè vix potest, major ne sit hominis ars an impotentia. Qui ne minimum quidem graminis foliculum, aut arenæ granulum facere potest, mundos tamen integros audacter fabricare aggreditur: qui nihil quicquam facit, omnia interim imitatur. Ecce mundi hujus magni machinam, artificio opificis, in parvum volumen contractam; casu verò, multò contractiorem. Vidisset hoc modò, qui, Platonis Rempublicam muribus corrosam cernens, fatalem illius politiæ cladem exinde hariolatus est, casum hunc proculdubio velut pessimi ominis plenum interpretatus fuisset.

Quicquid demùm de materiali hoc mundo fiat, cujus ad interitum declinatio non minùs videtur posse cum Divinâ Providentiâ consistere quam microcosmi istius humani, nimis certè constat mundi hujus moralis fabricam ultimis temporibus miserè luxatum iri. A malo ad pejus declinat passim genus humanum. Qui

us, that the last shall be perilous. Happy is he, that can stand upright when the world declines; and can endeavour to repair the common ruin, with a constancy in goodness.

solus temporum omnium faber est, clarè prædixit pessimos fore periculosissimosque novissimos mundi dies. O illum verè fœlicem, qui, declinante quàmlibet mundo, stare rectus potest; communemque universi ruinam, constanti quâdam virtute ac bonitate, reparare contendit.

On a cloud.

VII.

Ad conspectum nubis.

WHETHER it were a natural cloud, wherewith our ascending Saviour was intercepted from the eyes of his disciples, upon Mount Olivet, I enquire not: this I am sure of, that the time now was when a cloud surpassed the sun in glory. How did the intentive eyes of those ravished beholders envy that happy meteor; and, since they could no more see that glorious body, fixed themselves upon that celestial chariot, wherewith it was carried up! The angels could tell the gazing disciples, to fetch them off from that astonishing prospect, that *this Jesus should so come again as they had seen him depart.* He went up in a cloud; and he shall come again, in the clouds of heaven, to his Last Judgment.

O Saviour, I cannot look upward, but I must see the sensible monuments, both of thine ascension and return. Let no cloud of worldliness or infidelity hinder me, from following thee in thine ascension, or from expecting thee in thy return.

FUERITNE nubes merè naturalis, quâ Servator noster in cœlum ascendens à discipulorum suorum oculis, in Monte Oliveti interceptus fuit, non anxiè disquiro: hoc certò scio, modò fuisse tempus in quo nubes solem ipsum gloriâ exuperarit. O quàm invidebant fœlici illi meteoro intentissimi intuentium oculi; et, quandoquidem gloriosum illud corpus cernere ultrà non licuerit, figebant se firmissimis radiis in curru illo cœlesti, quo subvectum fuerat, ægrè divellendi! Angeli, quo tam avidos prospicientium oculos ab hoc tam stupendo simul ac grato spectaculo amoverent, discipulos graviter monuerunt, *ita planè reversurum Jesum hunc ac illi discedentem conspicati fuissent.* In nube ascendit; in nubibus cœli, mundum judicaturus, demùm revertetur.

Non possum, ô benignissime Servator, oculos sursum tollere, quin necesse mihi fuerit clarissima tui monumenta et ascendentis et redeuntis intueri. Faxis, oro, ne qua nubes sive sæcularium cogitationum sive infidelitatis animum mihi intercipiat, quò minùs vel sequi te ascendentem, vel reducem expectare possim.

On the sight of a grave digged up. VIII. *Ad conspectum sepulchri effossi.*

THE earth, as it is a great devourer, so also it is a great preserver too: liquors and fleshes are therein long kept from putrifying; and are rather heightened in their spirits, by being buried in it: but, above all, how safely doth it keep our bodies for the Resurrection! We are here but laid up for custody. Balms, and sere-cloths, and leads cannot do so much, as this lap of our common Mother: when all these are dissolved into her dust, as being unable to keep themselves from corruption, she receives and restores her charge. I can no more withhold my body from the earth, than the earth can withhold it from my Maker.

O God, this is thy cabinet or shrine, wherein thou pleasest to lay up the precious relics of thy dear Saints, until the Jubilee of Glory: with what confidence should I commit myself to this sure reposition, while I know thy word just, thy power infinite!

TERRA, uti magnus rerum heluo, ita et fidissimus earundem custos et conservator meritò audit: in cujus visceribus liquores, sed et carnes quædam, diu à putredine vindicantur; inibique reconditorum spiritus magis exaltari solent et educi fortiores: præcipuè verò, quàm tutò servat corpora hæc nostra in illum Resurrectionis diem! Custodiendi, nempe, nos istic reponimur. Balsami, cerata lintea, capsulæ plumbeæ non ita fideliter hoc præstant, ac communis iste Matris sinus: ubi omnia hæc in suum pulverem reciderint, quippe quæ non possunt semet à sui dissolutione liberare, illa recipit restituitque chara hæc pignora. Neque magis potero ipse corpusculum hoc meum à terrâ detinere, quàm terra illud detinere potest à manu Creatoris.

O Deus, hæc arcula tua est scriniumve sacrum, in quo preciosas Sanctorum tuorum reliquias, usque ad ultimum Gloriæ Jubilæum, servari voluisti: quàm me fidenter commendare ausim tutissimæ huic repositioni, qui certò norim, et verbum tuum esse justum, et potentiam infinitam!

On the sight of gold melted. IX. *Ad conspectum auri liquati.*

THIS gold is both the fairest and most solid of all metals; yet is the soonest melted with the fire: others, as they are coarser, so more churlish, and hard to be wrought upon by a dissolution.

Thus, a sound and good heart is most easily melted into sorrow and fear, by the sense of God's

Aurum hoc uti pulcherrimum est metallorum omnium ita et solidissimum; quod tamen facillimè omnium igne liquefieri solet: alia, ut viliora, sic tenaciora, quasique morosiora sunt, et quæ dissolutioni cedant ægriùs.

Ita, purum probèque dispositum pectus, sensu judiciorum Divinorum, tantò citiùs in pium

judgments; whereas, the carnal mind is stubborn and remorseless. All metals are but earth; yet some are of finer temper than others: all hearts are of flesh; yet some are, through the power of grace, more capable of spiritual apprehensions.

O God, we are such, as thou wilt be pleased to make us. Give me a heart, that may be sound for the truth of grace, and melting at the terrors of thy Law; I can be for no other than thy sanctuary on earth, or thy treasury of heaven.

dolorem timoremque resolvitur; ubi, carnalis animus obstinatè firmus est, salutarisque pœnitentiæ haud parùm incapax. Quid nisi terra est quodcunque demum metallum; est tamen aliud alio nobilius: cor omne caro est; hoc tamen illo, virtute inoperantis gratiæ, impressionis spiritualis capacius.

O Deus, tales nos sumus, quales tu facere voluisti. Da mihi cor, obsecro, quoad veritatem gratiæ syncerum solidumque, terroribus verò Legis tuæ haud difficulter fusile; ita, obrysi metalli instar aptus ero, et sanctuario tuo in terris, et gazophylacio in cœlis.

X. *On the sight of a pitcher carried.*

X. *Ad conspectum amphoræ circumgestatæ.*

THUS, those, that are great and weak, are carried by the ears, up and down, of flatterers and parasites: thus, ignorant and simple hearers are carried, by false and miszealous teachers. Yet, to be carried by both ears is more safe, than to be carried by one. It argues an empty pitcher, to be carried by one alone. Such are they, that, upon the hearing of one part, rashly pass their sentence, whether of acquittal or censure. In all disquisitions of hidden truths, a wise man will be led by the ears, not carried; that implies a violence of passion, over-swaying judgment: but, in matter of civil occurrence and unconcerning rumour, it is good to use the ear, not to trust to it.

QUI loco potentes sunt, parùm valentes judicio, facilè hàc illàc, ab adulatoribus et parasitis, hoc planè modo, auribus gestari solent: ita, ignari simplicesque auditores, à falsis et malè-zelosis doctoribus misèrè circumvehuntur. At sanè, utrâque aure, quàm unâ portari tutius est. Vacuam planè ollam arguit, unâ ferri aure. Ejusmodi sunt præproperi illi judices, qui, parte unà auditâ, sententiam, sive absolutionis sive damnationis, temerè ferre non dubitant. In omni veritatis abstrusæ disquisitione, vir sapiens duci auribus, non gestari sustinet; nimirum hoc violentum quendam passionis impetum arguit, quo recta ratio à suâ sede disturbatur: in rebus, verò, civilibus ac communi famâ, uti auribus licet, certè fidere auribus parùm expedit.

On the sight of a tree full blossomed.

HERE is a tree overlaid with blossoms. It is not possible, that all these should prosper: one of them must needs rob the other of moisture and growth.

I do not love to see an infancy over hopeful: in these pregnant beginnings, one faculty starves another; and, at last, leaves the mind sapless and barren. As, therefore, we are wont to pull off some of the too-frequent blossoms, that the rest may thrive; so, it is good wisdom, to moderate the early excess of the parts or progress of over-forward childhood.

Neither is it otherwise in our Christian profession. A sudden and lavish ostentation of grace may fill the eye with wonder, and the mouth with talk; but will not, at the last, fill the lap with fruit. Let me not promise too much, nor raise too high expectations of my undertakings. I would rather men should complain of my small hopes, than of my short performances.

XI. *Ad conspectum arboris nimiùm efflorescentis.*

ECCE istìc arborem flosculis nimio quàm onustam. Fieri non potest, ut flores hi omnes adolescant, et spem fructûs edant: unus alterum et humore spoliat et incremento.

Non equidem nimis mihi gestit animus videre infantiam plus æquo feracem: in præcocibus hisce initiis, una facultas detrahit alteri; tandemque, animum succi expertem sterilemque prorsùs relinquit. Ut, ergo, in more nobis est quosdam ex superfluis hisce ac nimiùm numerosis floribus avellere, ut eo magis crescant reliqui; ita, non minimæ prudentiæ est, moderari primos hosce præmaturæ pueritiæ excessus.

Neque aliter profectò se habet in re professionis Christianæ. Subita ac prodiga gratiæ ostentatio facilè implere potest et oculos vanâ admiratione, et os futili elogio; vix unquam sero fructu gremium, tandem, impletura. Quod ad me; stet mihi, neque nimium promittere, neque majorem quàm par est de me expectationem aliorum ciere. Malo de me conquerantur homines quòd minus pollicear, quàm quòd parum præstem.

On the report of a man suddenly struck dead, in his sin.

I CANNOT but magnify the justice of God; but, withal, I must praise his mercy. It were woe with any of us all, if God should take us at advantages. Alas! which of us hath not committed sins, worthy of a present revenge? Had we been also sur-

XII. *De quodam subitâ morte, in actu peccati, abrepto.*

NON possum non Dei justitiam summâ laude prosequi; ita, tamen, ut non minùs interea laudem ejus misericordiam. Miserrimè nobis cederet, si Deus omnem de nobis vindictæ ansam arriperet. Væ nihi! quis nostrûm non æquè commisit peccata,

prised in those acts, where had we been?

O God, it is more than thou owest us, that thou hast waited for our repentance: it is no more than thou owest us, that thou plaguest our offences. *The wages of sin is death;* and it is but justice, to pay due wages. Blessed be thy justice, that hast made others examples to me: blessed be thy mercy, that hast not made me an example unto others.

præsentaneâ ultione dignissima? Si in malorum illorum actuum flagrantiâ subitò nos surripuisset vindex Deus, ubi fuissemus?

O Deus, plus est quàm nobis misellis debes, quòd pœnitentiam nostram usque expectasti: non minus est quàm nobis debes, quòd peccata nostra graviter ulciscerís. *Stipendium peccati mors est;* stipendium verò merenti rependere, justitiæ est. Benedicta sit semper justitia tua, qui mihi feceris alios justæ severitatis exempla: benedicta sit misericordia tua, qui me aliis exemplum propinare gratiosissimè distuleris.

On the view of the heaven and the earth. XIII. *Ad conspectum cœli et terræ.*

WHAT a strange contrariety is here! The heaven is in continual motion; and yet, there is the only place of rest: the earth ever stands still; and yet, here is nothing but unrest and unquietness. Surely, the end of that heavenly motion is for the benefit of the earth; and the end of all these earthly turmoils is our reposal in heaven. Those, that have imagined the earth to turn about and the heavens to stand still, have yet supposed, that we may stand or sit still on that whirling globe of earth: how much more may we be persuaded of our perfect rest, above those moving spheres!

It matters not, O God, how I am vexed here below, a while; if, ere long, I may repose with thee above, for ever.

O STUPENDAM contrarietatem! Perpetuò movetur cœlum; et tamen, solus est quieti locus: terra è contrà semper quiescit; et tamen, nihil ibi est præter molestas agitationes, motus irrequietos. Certè, finis illius cœlestis circumvolutionis unicum est terræ beneficium; terrenarum verò istarum concitationum constantisque vexationis finis unicus est quies in cœlis. Ii, qui imaginati sunt terram circumvolvi cœlumque immotum consistere, supposuerunt hoc tamen fieri, ut nobis in hoc circumquaque rapto terræ globo quietis sive stare sive sedere interim liceret: quantò magis suaderi nobis potest, perfectam beatis omnibus requiem, super mobiles hasce sphæras repositam esse!

Parùm refert, ô Deus, quibus me, breviculo hoc spatio, curarum motibus agi contigerit; dummodò, certum mihi sit, non multo post tempore, æternam tecum in cœlis requiem indubiò reponi.

On occasion of a red-breast coming into his chamber, and singing.

PRETTY bird, how cheerfully dost thou sit and sing; and yet knowest not where thou art, nor where thou shalt make thy next meal, and at night must shroud thyself in a bush for lodging! What a shame is it for me, that see before me so liberal provisions of my God, and find myself set warm under my own roof; yet am ready to droop under a distrustful and unthankful dulness! Had I so little certainty of my harbour and purveyance, how heartless should I be, how careful! how little list should I have, to make music to thee or myself! Surely, thou camest not hither without a Providence. God sent thee, not so much to delight, as to shame me; but all in a conviction of my sullen unbelief, who, under more apparent means, am less cheerful and confident. Reason and faith have not done so much in me, as in thee mere instinct of nature. Want of foresight makes thee more merry, if not more happy, here, than the foresight of better things maketh me.

O God, thy Providence is not impaired by those powers, thou hast given me, above these brute things: let not my greater helps hinder me, from a holy security and comfortable reliance upon thee.

XIV. *Ad conspectum erithaci cubiculum suum intrantis, canentisque.*

BELLA avicula, quàm tu alacris istìc sedes et cantillas; et tamen nescis aut ubi sis, aut unde tibi cœnam comparare possis, aut in quo demum arbusculo tibi licebit postmodò pernoctari! Quàm me jam pudet mei, qui, ubi tam largam mihi alimoniam munificâ Dei manu parari videam, meque sentiam ædibus hisce meis tutò ac commodè insidentem; tristi tamen quâdam et ingratâ diffidentiâ languescere videor! Ego verò si æquè incertus essem aut domicilii aut alimenti, quàm mœstus essem, quàm solicitus! quantilla mihi lubido foret, aut tibi cantandi aut mihi ipsi! Certè, non sine Providentiâ quâdam venisti tu huc. Misit nempe te huc Deus, non tam ut delectares mihi animum, quàm ut me pudore justo suffunderes; convinceresque tetricæ cujusdam infidelitatis, qui, cum media palam abundè suppetant, minùs tamen aut gestiam aut confidam. Ratio ac fides non tantum apud me valuerunt, quantum merus apud te naturæ instinctus. Ipsa hæc futuri nescientia hilariorem te præstat fœlicioremque, quàm me certa conditionis melioris præscientia.

O Deus, non minuitur Providentia tua donis illis, quæ mihi, super bruta hæc animalia, benignus indulsisti: noli sinere, ut majora hæc adminicula impedimento mihi sint, quò minùs et sanctè securus sim et fidenter alacris.

On occasion of a spider in his window.

THERE is no vice in man, whereof there is not some analogy in

XV. *Ad conspectum aranеæ in fenestrâ latitantis.*

NULLUM in homine vitium est, cujus imago quædam et analo-

the brute creatures. As amongst us men, there are thieves by land, and pirates by sea, that live by spoil and blood: so is there in every kind amongst them variety of natural sharkers; the hawk, in the air; the pike, in the river; the whale, in the sea; the lion, and tiger, and wolf, in the desert; the wasp, in the hive; the spider, in our window.

Amongst the rest, see how cunningly this little Arabian hath spread out his tent for a prey; how heedfully he watches for a passenger. So soon as ever he hears the noise of a fly afar off, how he hastens to his door! and if that silly heedless traveller do but touch upon the verge of that unsuspected walk, how suddenly doth he seize upon the miserable booty; and, after some strife, binding him fast with those subtle cords, drags the helpless captive after him into his cave!

What is this, but an emblem of those spiritual freebooters, that lie in wait for our souls? They are the spiders; we, the flies: they have spread their nets of sin; if we be once caught, they bind us fast, and hale us into hell.

O Lord, deliver thou my soul from their crafty ambushes: their poison is greater; their webs both more strong and more insensibly woven. Either teach me to avoid temptation; or make me to break through it, by repentance: oh, let me not be a prey to those fiends, that lie in wait for my destruction.

gia in brutis animalibus reperiri non possit. Ut inter nos, suos habet terra latrones, mare piratas, qui spoliis vivunt ac sanguine: ita et nullum non genus animalium nativos quosdam habet speciei suæ grassatores; in aere, accipiter est; lupus piscis, in fluvio; in oceano, cete; leo, tigris, lupus, in deserto; in apum præsepibus, vespæ; araneæ, in fenestris.

Inter reliqua, vide mihi ut pusillus iste Arabs subdolè tentorium suum extendit prædæque inhiat; quàm studiosè insidiatur viatori. Quam primùm audit à longè vel minimum advolantis muscæ sonitum, quàm festinat illico ad antri sui ostiolum, curiosè speculaturus! quòd si incautus ille hospes vel extimum tenuissimæ telæ ambitum semel tetigerit, quàm subitò accurrit insilitque miserrimo captivo; et, post quandam luctæ speciem, arctè illum vinciens subtilioribus suis funiculis, misellam post se prædam in antrum trahit!

Quid hoc aliud est, nisi emblema latronum illorum spiritualium, qui perpetuas animis nostris insidias struunt? Illi araneæ sunt; nos, muscæ: illi peccatorum retia nobis capiendis quàm latissimè extenderunt; in quæ ubi semel inciderimus, ligamur illico, et in gehennam rapimur. Libera animam meam, ô Deus, ab astutis secretisque istorum machinationibus: nempe et horum venenum longè magis mortiferum est; et telæ robustiores textæque subtiliùs. Aut doce me, quæso, tentationem evadere; aut, vi pœnitentiæ, laqueos iniquitatum perrumpere: faxisque, ne prædæ sim malis illis spiritibus, qui animæ meæ perniciem insidiosè moliuntur.

On the sight of a rain, in the sunshine. XVI. *Ad conspectum pluviæ, sole interim splendente.*

SUCH is my best condition in this life. If the sun of God's countenance shine upon me, I may well be content to be wet with some rain of affliction. How oft have I seen the heaven overcast with clouds and tempest; no sun appearing to comfort me! yet even those gloomy and stormy seasons have I rid out patiently, only with the help of the common light of the day: at last, those beams have broken forth happily, and cheered my soul. It is well for my ordinary state, if, through the mists of mine own dulness and Satan's temptations, I can descry some glimpse of heavenly comfort: let me never hope, while I am in this vale, to see the clear face of that sun, without a shower. Such happiness is reserved for above: that upper region of glory is free from these doubtful and miserable vicissitudes.

There, O God, we shall see as we are seen. *Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart.*

TALIS est vel optima vitæ hujus conditio. Si sol divini vultûs mihi tantillùm affulserit, non est quòd ægrè mihi fuerit afflictionum pluviis interea madefieri. Quoties vidi ego cœli faciem nubibus et tempestatibus obvolutam; nullo interim splendescente sole! tristia tamen illa et nebulosa tempora patienter evici, solo fretus communis lucis solatio: tandem verò, radii illi fœliciter emicuerunt, animamque mihi exhilarârunt. Benè mecum actum erit, si, quoad ordinarium vitæ statum, licuerit mihi, per innatæ cujusdam tristitiæ nebulas Satanæque tentationes, vel minimo cœlestis consolationis obtutu frui: non est quòd sperem, dum in hâc valle sum, claram solis faciem, absque omni sive imbre sive nubeculâ, contueri. Uni cœlo reservatur hæc tanta beatitudo: suprema illa regio gloriæ ab his dubiis miserisque vicissitudinum turbis immunis est.

Ibi, ô Deus, videbimus uti videmur ipsi. *Lux sata est justis, et rectis corde gaudium.*

On the length of the way. XVII. *De viæ longitudine.*

How far off is yonder great mountain! My very eye is weary with the foresight of so great a distance; yet time and patience shall overcome it: this night we shall hope to lodge beyond it. Some things are more tedious in their expectation, than in their

HEU, quantum distat mons ille, quem à longè conspicor! Ipse mihi oculus tantæ intercapedinis merâ prævisione fatigatur; tempus tamen et patientia intervallum illud facilè superabunt: hâc nocte sperabo fore ut nos ultra fastigia illa pernoctemur. Sunt

performance. The comfort is, that every step I take sets me nearer to my end: when I once come there, I shall both forget how long it now seems, and please myself to look back upon the way that I have measured.

It is thus in our passage to heaven. My weak nature is ready to faint, under the very conceit of the length and difficulty of this journey: my eye doth not more guide than discourage me. Many steps of grace and true obedience shall bring me insensibly thither. Only, let me move, and hope: and God's good leisure shall perfect my salvation.

O Lord, give me to possess my soul with patience; and not so much to regard speed, as certainty. When I come to the top of thy holy hill, all these weary paces and deep sloughs, shall either be forgotten, or contribute to my happiness in their remembrance.

quædam quorum expectatio plus in se tædii habet, quàm executio. Illud me solatur interim, nullum posse vestigium metiri quo non accedam propiùs ad viæ terminum: quem ubi semel fuero assecutus, facilè quidem et itineris longitudinem obliviscar, et refocillabo mihi animum retrospectando in immensum hunc terræ tractum, quem ita tempestivè licuit pedibus commensurari.

Non aliter se habet in nostro cœlum versus itinere. Natura hæc, imbecillitatis suæ conscia, merâ et longitudinis et difficultatis præcogitatione languere incipit: oculus non magis ducit, quàm dejicit mihi animum. Multa gratiæ et veræ obedientiæ vestigia illò me sensim perducent. Tantùm, movere mihi fas sit, et sperare: divina bonitas opportunè tandem salutem meam perficiet.

Da mihi interea, ô Deus, animum meum constanti quâdam patientiâ possidere; et non tam celeritatem respicere, quàm certitudinem. Ubi ad summitatem sancti montis tui adspiraverim, omnes hi molesti gressus viæque sive cœnosæ paludes sive ardua præcipitia, vel prorsùs oblivioni dabuntur, vel certè memoriâ sui ad fælicitatis meæ cumulum haud parùm adjicient.

On the rain and waters.

XVIII. *Ad conspectum pluviæ et aquarum.*

WHAT a sensible interchange there is in nature, betwixt union and division! Many vapours, rising from the sea, meet together in one cloud: that cloud falls down divided into several drops: those drops run toge-

Quàm certam ipsique sensui obnoxiam vicissitudinem constituit natura, inter unionem ac divisionem! Vapores multi, è mari exorti, in unam conveniunt nubem: decidit illa nubes in plurimas guttas divisa: concurrunt hæ

ther; and, in many rills of water, meet in the same channels: those channels run into the brook, those brooks into the rivers, those rivers into the sea. One receptacle is for all, though a large one: and all make back to their first and main original.

So it either is, or should be, with spiritual gifts. O God, thou distillest thy graces upon us, not for our reservation, but conveyance. Those manifold faculties, thou lettest fall upon several men, thou wouldest not have drenched up where they light; but wouldest have derived, through the channels of their special vocations, into the common streams of public use, for Church, or Commonwealth.— Take back, O Lord, those few drops, thou hast rained upon my soul; and return them into that great ocean of the glory of thine own bounty, from whence they had their beginning.

guttæ illico; et, per multa stillicidia, in eundem canalem desinunt: canales illi in rivulos, rivuli in flumina, flumina in mare confluunt. Receptaculum unum, vastum illud quidem capaxque, omnia hæc suo sinu complectitur: istuc nempe velut ad primum ac originale principium refluunt ac recurrunt omnia.

Pari modo se habet, aut habere saltem debet, cum donis spiritualibus ac divinis. Tu, ô Deus, charismata super nos tua ubertim diffundis, non servanda nobis ilicet, sed aliis derivanda. Multijuges illæ facultates, quas in varium hominum genus depluere tibi placuit, non eo abs te animo dimissæ sunt ut eo ipso in loco absorberentur in quo decidunt; sed, ut per diversarum vocationum canales, in fluenta communia, universali sive Ecclesiæ sive Reipublicæ bono, deducerentur. Recipe à me, Domine, pauculas illas guttulas, quibus animam meam irrigare voluisti; faxisque redeant affatim in immensum illud gloriosæ gratiæ tuæ oceanum, unde originem sumpserunt.

XIX.

On the same subject. *Ad eundem, rursus.*

Many drops fill the channels; and many channels swell up the brooks; and many brooks raise the rivers over the banks. The brooks are not out, till the channels be empty: the rivers rise not, while the small brooks are full: but, when the little rivulets have once voided themselves into the main streams, then all is overflown. Great matters arise from small beginnings: many littles make up a large bulk.

Guttæ multæ canaliculos implent; canaliculi multi, rivulos: rivulorum multorum incursu turgescunt flumina. Haud excedere solent ripas suas rivuli, donec se evacuaverint canaliculi: neque intumescunt flumina, dum pleni sunt rivuli: sed, ubi semel fluvioli se in amnes exoneraverint, tota vallis subitâ exundatione operitur. Ex parvis initiis oriuntur magna: è multis minimis larga concrescit moles. Mundus

Yea what is the world, but a composition of atoms?

We have seen it thus in civil estates: the empairing of the commons hath oft been the raising of the great: their streams have run low, till they have been heightened by the confluence of many private inlets: many a mean channel hath been emptied to make up their inundation.

Neither is it otherwise, in my whether outward or spiritual condition: O God, thou hast multiplied my drops into streams: as, out of many minutes, thou hast made up my age; so, out of many lessons, thou hast made up my competency of knowledge: thou hast drained many beneficent friends, to make me competently rich: by many holy motions, thou hast wrought me to some measure of grace. Oh, teach me wisely and moderately to enjoy thy bounty; and to reduce thy streams into thy drops, and thy drops into thy clouds: humbly and thankfully acknowledging whence and how I have all that I have, all that I am.

iste, quid tandem est nisi quiddam ex atomis conflatum?

Etiam in rebus civilibus ita factum vidimus: imæ plebis diminuta supellex potentiorum opes haud parùm auxit: quibus nempe satis angusta res fuit, donec privatorum quorundam influxuum accessione crevisset: quot evacuatis canalibus debent isti tantam potentiæ inundationem!

Neque aliter se mecum habet, in quâcunque sive externâ sive spirituali conditione: O Deus, tu guttas meas in undas multiplicâsti: ut, ex plurimis temporis momentis, ætatem meam conflasti; ita, ex multis documentis, hunc mihi quantillum cognitionis modulum complere voluisti: ex multorum amicorum beneficâ largitione, quantillas opes congessisti: multis denique Spiritûs tui sanctis motibus influxibusque, ad aliquam saltem gratiæ mensuram me suaviter perduxisti. Doce me, ô Deus, sapienter moderatèque bonitate tuâ frui; daque ut quas impertiisti mihi undas in guttas tuas reducam, guttas verò tuas in nubes: adeoque unde et quomodo quicquid habeo, quicquid sum, humili gratoque animo agnoscam.

On occasion of the lights brought in. XX. *Lucernâ introductâ.*

WHAT a change there is in the room, since the light came in! yea, in ourselves! All things seem to have a new form, a new life: yea, we are not the same we were. How goodly a creature is light! how pleasing, how agreeable to the spirits of man! no visible thing comes so near to the resembling of the nature of the soul; yea, of the God,

QUANTUM verò mutatus, ex quo lumen introiit, videtur locus iste! imò, et nos ipsi! Omnia profectò novam formam, et vitam quasi novam induisse visa sunt: neque nos ipsi iidem sumus. Quàm pulchra res lux est! quàm jucunda, quàm spiritibus humanis aprimè congrua! nec qua rerum visibilium uspiam est, quæ ita propè accedit ad naturam animæ

that made it. As, contrarily, what an uncomfortable thing is darkness! insomuch as we punish the greatest malefactors with obscurity of dungeons; as thinking they could not be miserable enough, if they might have the privilege of beholding the light: yea, hell itself can be no more horribly described, than by outward darkness. What is darkness, but absence of light? The pleasure or the horror of light or darkness, is according to the quality and degree of the cause, whence it ariseth.

And if the light of a poor candle be so comfortable, which is nothing but a little inflamed air gathered about a moistened snuff; what is the light of the glorious sun, the great lamp of heaven! But, much more, what is the light of that infinitely-resplendent Sun of Righteousness, who gave that light to the sun, that sun to the world! And, if this partial and imperfect darkness be so doleful, which is the privation of a natural or artificial light: how unconceivable dolorous and miserable shall that be, which is caused through the utter absence of the all-glorious God, who is the Father of Lights! O Lord, how justly do we pity those wretched souls, *that sit in darkness and the shadow of death;* shut up from the light of the saving knowledge of thee, the only True God! But, how am I swallowed up with horror, to think of the fearful condition of those damned souls, that are for ever shut out from the presence of God, and adjudged to exquisite and everlasting darkness! The Egyptians

nostræ; imò, creatoris, Dei. Uti, è contrà, quàm tristes sunt tenebræ! adeò ut sceleratissimos quosque carcerum obscuritate punire soleamus; utpote, quos satis miseros esse posse non arbitremur, modò lucis hujusce privilegio frui liceret: sed, et ipsi damnatorum cruciatus non atrociore quopiam, quàm extimarum tenebrarum nomine, describi solent. Quid aliud sunt tenebræ, quàm mera lucis absentia? Lucis verò tenebrarumve sive jucunditas sive horror, secundum qualitatem gradumve causæ, unde ortum habet, solet æstimari.

Quòd si pauperis lucernæ igniculus, qui nihil aliud est nisi pauxillum inflammati aeris fuliginosi cujusdam lini oleaginosæ pinguedini circumfusi, ita oculos animumque afficiat; quantò magis gloriosis solis radiis, cœlestis lampadis splendore delectamur! Quantò, verò, adhuc magis supremi illius æternùmque splendentis Justitiæ Solis, qui hoc lumen soli visibili, hunc solem mundo donavit, beatificâ luce refocillamur! Et, si dubiæ hæ imperfectæque tenebræ, quæ præter luminis sive naturalis sive artificialis privationem nihil omnino sunt, tantum tristitiæ secum afferre solent; quantum horroris incutient diræ illæ tenebræ, quæ ab æternâ gloriosissimi Dei, Patris Luminum, absentiâ oriuntur! Quantâ, ô Domine, quàmque justâ miseratione prosequimur infœlices illas animas, *quæ in ignorantiæ tenebris ac umbrâ mortis securè usque sedent;* ab omni salutari tui, Veri nempe Dei, cognitione miserrimè exclusæ! Sed, quanto horrore concutior planèque consternor, ubi subit animum tremenda damna-

were weary of themselves in their three days' darkness; yet we do not find any pain, that accompanied their continuing night: what shall we say to those woeful souls, in whom the sensible presence of infinite torment shall meet with the torment of the perpetual absence of God?

tarum illarum animarum conditio, quæ à facie divinâ perpetuò arcentur, exquisitissimis sempiternisque caligínibus adjudicatæ! Pigebat sui Ægyptios etiam ob tenebras triduanas; nusquam tamen comperimus cruciatuum genus ullum, longam illam noctem fuisse comitatum: quid igitur dicemus de illis deploratissimis animabus, in quibus infinitorum torminum sensus cum summo perpetuæ Dei absentiæ cruciatu, horrendo planè modo, conjungetur?

O thou, who art the True Light, shine ever through all the blind corners of my soul; and, from these weak glimmerings of grace, bring me to the perfect brightness of thy glory.

O tu, qui solus es Vera Lux, diffunde radios tuos per cæcas omnes animæ meæ latebras anfractusque; meque, per debiles quasdam gratiæ emicationes, ad perfectum gloriæ tuæ splendorem perducito.

XXI.

On the same occasion. *De eâdem.*

As well as we love the light, we are wont to salute it, at the first coming in, with winking or closed eyes; as not abiding to see that, without which we cannot see. All sudden changes, though to the better, have a kind of trouble attending them. By how much more excellent any object is, by so much more is our weak sense mis-affected in the first apprehending of it.

QUANTUMLIBET lucem diligamus, solemus tamen eam, primo ingressu, conniventibus clausisque oculis salutare; non sustinentes videre illud, sine quo nihil videmus. Subitæ mutationes, tametsi fortè in melius, aliquid sécum semper molestiæ ferre solent. Quanto spectaculum aliquod excellentius est et splendidius, tanto magis debilis oculorum nostrorum acies primo illius obtutu offenditur.

O Lord, if thou shouldest manifest thy glorious presence to us here, we should be confounded in the sight of it: how wisely, how mercifully hast thou reserved that for our glorified estate; where no infirmity shall dazzle our eyes; where perfect righteousness shall give us perfect boldness both of sight and fruition!

O Domine, si tu gloriosam præsentiam tuam nobis istìc agentibus patefaceres, hujus nos intuitu prorsùs confunderemur illico: quàm sapienter, quàm gratiosè istoc reservasti glorificationis nostræ conditioni; ubi nulla oculos nostros debilitabit infirmitas, aut perstringet gloria; ubi absoluta justitia perfectam nobis et visionis et fruitionis fiduciam æternùm præstabit!

On the blowing of the fire. XXII. *Accenso igne.*

WE beat back the flame; not with a purpose to suppress it, but to raise it higher, and to diffuse it more.

Those afflictions and repulses, which seem to be discouragements, are indeed the merciful incitements of grace. If God did mean judgment to my soul, he would either withdraw the fuel, or pour water upon the fire, or suffer it to languish for want of new motions: but now, that he continues to me the means and opportunities and desires of good, I shall misconstrue the intentions of my God, if I shall think his crosses sent rather to damp than to quicken his Spirit in me.

O God, if thy bellows did not sometimes thus breathe upon me, in spiritual repercussions; I should have just cause to suspect my estate: those few weak gleeds of grace, that are in me, might soon go out, if they were not thus refreshed: still blow upon them, till they kindle; still kindle them, till they flame up to thee.

REPERCUTIMUS flammam; non supprimendi quidem animo, sed excitandi potiùs, augendique.

Afflictiones illæ repulsæque, quæ dejicere nobis animum aut planè demere videntur, revera nihil aliud sunt quàm benignissima gratiæ incitamenta. Si judicii vindictam animæ meæ intenderet Deus, aut fomitem (gratiæ motus) mihi subduceret, aut frigidum igni suffunderet, aut bonorum subinde motuum defectu flammam languere sineret et interire: nunc verò, ubi adminicula opportunitatesque boni et desideria sancta mihi continuò subministrare voluerit, malè profectò mentem Dei mei interpretabor, si afflictiones hasce, ad restinguendum potiùs quàm ad accendendum vivificandumque Spiritum in me suum, immissas judicavero.

O Deus, nisi folles tui aliquando in me sufflando vehementiùs, spirituali quâdam repercussione, animam mihi exercerent; conditionem equidem meam meritò suspectam haberem: pauculæ illæ minimæque gratiæ scintillæ, quæ animæ meæ superstites sunt, citò extinctæ forent, nisi hoc modo excitarentur: perge, ô Domine, adflare illis fortiter, donec accendantur; accendere, donec ad te usque exardescant, flammasque in cœlum emittant.

On the barking of a dog. XXIII. *Ad canis latratum.*

WHAT have I done to this dog, that he follows me with this angry clamour? Had I rated him, or shaken my staff, or stooped down for a stone, I had justly

Quid verò feci ego cani huic, qui me sic irato clamore prosequitur? Si illum increpuissem acriùs, baculumve ei intentassem, aut pronus quæsissem lapidem

drawn on this noise, this snarling importunity.

But, why do I wonder to find this unquiet disposition in a brute creature, when it is no news with the reasonable? Have I not seen innocence and merit bayed at, by the quarrelsome and envious vulgar, without any provocation, save of good offices? Have I not felt, more than their tongue, their teeth upon my heels; when I know I have deserved nothing, but fawning on? Where is my grace, or spirits, if I have not learned to contemn both?

O God, let me rather die, than willingly incur thy displeasure; yea, than justly offend thy godly-wise, judicious, conscionable servants: but if humour, or faction, or causeless prejudice fall upon me, for my faithful service to thee; let these bawling curs tire themselves, and tear their throats, with loud and false censures: I go on, in a silent constancy; and, if my ear be beaten, yet my heart shall be free.

quo illum impeterem, meritò irritâssem hunc strepitum, hosque nimis importunos latratus.

At verò, quid mirum videri debet in brutis hanc inquietam dispositionem comperire, cùm hoc idem in hominibus ratione præditis usu veniat? Annon vidi ego sæpiùs innocentiam, ac benè-merita, rixosi invidique vulgi allatrationibus, absque omni, nisi bonorum forsan officiorum provocatione, exceptam? Annon sensi ego, non linguas modò, sed et dentes istorum nihil suspicantis mei calcibus infixos; qui nihil interea, nisi meras blanditias meruerim? Ubi aut virtus mea, aut animus, si non didicerim utrumque horum contemnere?

Moriar ego, ô Deus, moriar priùs, quàm volens quicquam patravero, quod iram tuam, justamque piorum cordatorumque servorum tuorum offensam proritet mereaturque: quòd si malus cujusquam genius, factiove, aut injustum fortè præjudicium, fidelitatis erga te meæ causâ, impetierit; fatigent sibi, quantum volunt, disrumpantque guttura clamosi hi canes, falsis canorisque censuris: silenti quâdam constantiâ, pergam ego interim; et, si aures mihi vapulent, cor sanè liberum ac securum conquiescet.

On sight of a cock-fight.

XXIV. *Visâ ἀλεκτρυομαχίᾳ sive gallorum pugnâ.*

How fell these creatures out? Whence grew this so bloody combat? Here was neither old grudge, nor present injury. What then is the quarrel? Surely, nothing, but that which should rather unite and reconcile them; one common nature: they are

Quid verò est quòd ita dissident isti alites? Unde tam cruenta hæc pugna? Certè nec vetus aliqua simultas, nec recens injuria in causâ est. Quorsum ergo hæ tam diræ lites? Nihil, profectò, hos inter se committit, nisi quod unire potiùs ac conciliare

both of one feather. I do not see either of them fly upon creatures of different kinds; but, while they have peace with all others, they are at war with themselves: the very sight of each other was sufficient provocation. If this be the offence, why doth not each of them fall out with himself; since he hates and revenges in another, the being of that same which himself is?

Since man's sin brought debate into the world, nature is become a great quarreller. The seeds of discord were scattered, in every furrow of the creation; and came up in a numberless variety of antipathies: whereof yet none is more odious and deplorable, than those which are betwixt creatures of the same kind. What is this, but an image of that woeful hostility, which is exercised betwixt us reasonables; who are conjoined in one common humanity, if not religion? We fight with and destroy each other, more than those creatures, that want reason to temper their passions. No beast is so cruel to man, as himself: where one man is slain by a beast, ten thousand are slain by man. What is that war, which we study and practise, but the art of killing? Whatever Turks and Pagans may do, O Lord, how long shall this brutish fury arm Christians against each other? While even Devils are not at enmity with themselves, but accord in wickedness; why do we men so mortally oppose each other in good?

deberet; communis natura: eadem utrique species est. Non video horum alterutrum in diversi generis volucres involantem; sed, ubi cum aliis omnibus pacem alunt, bellum secum ipsi gerunt: nec aliâ quidem provocatione, quam mutuo sui conspectu irritantur. Quòd si hoc in culpâ sit, cur non unusquisque secum ipse dissidet; dum id quod ipse est, in alio odit ac ulciscitur?

Ex quo hominis peccatum litem in mundum intulit, plena est natura rixarum dissidiorumque. Nullus est in totâ creatione sulcus, in quem non jacta sunt discordiæ semina; inque vix finitam antipathiarum varietatem excreverint: quarum certè nulla vel odiosior est vel deploratior, quàm quæ inter creaturas ejusdam generis intercedere solet. Quid verò hoc aliud est, nisi imago tristis illius inimicitiæ, quæ inter nos rationis compotes, non communi modo humanitatis, sed et religionis etiam vinculo conjunctos, passim exercetur? Pugnamus, ilicet, nobiscum nosque perdimus mutuò, plus quàm animalia illa, quæ ratione domandis moderandisve affectibus destituuntur. Nec quæ bellua ita homini crudelis est, ac homo ipse: ubi unus ferarum sive dente sive ungue perit, multæ myriades humanâ manu trucidantur. Quid est bellum illud, quod tam studiosè gerimus, nisi ars occidendi? Quicquid Turcæ ac Pagani faciant, quousque, ô Deus, brutus iste furor armabit contra se invicem gentes Christianas? Etiam diabolis quidem ipsis inter se parùm disconvenit; concordes sunt illi in malo, nimis; unde fit, quòd nos homines ita nobismet in bono læthaliter adversemur?

O thou, that art the God of Peace, compose the unquiet hearts of men to a happy and universal concord; and, at last, refresh our souls with the multitude of peace.

O tu, qui solus es Pacis Deus, ita compone inquieta hominum pectora, ut in communi quâdam concordiâ fœliciter conspirent; recrea, tandem, animas nostras multitudine pacis.

On his lying down to rest. XXV. *Ad decubitum suum.*

WHAT a circle there is of human actions and events! We are never without some change; and yet that change is without any great variety. We sleep, and wake; and wake, and sleep; and eat, and evacuate; labour, in a continual interchange: yet hath the infinite wisdom of God so ordered it, that we are not weary of these perpetual iterations; but with no less appetite enter into our daily courses, than if we should pass them but once in our life. When I am weary of my day's labour, how willingly do I undress myself, and betake myself to my bed! and ere morning, when I have wearied my restless bed, how glad am I to rise and renew my labour!

Why am I not more desirous to be unclothed of this body, that I may be clothed-upon with immortality? What is this, but my closest garment; which when it is once put off, my soul is at liberty and ease? Many a time have I lain down here in desire of rest; and, after some tedious changing of sides, have risen sleepless, disappointed, languishing. In my last uncasing, my body shall not fail of repose, nor my soul of joy; and, in my rising up, neither of them shall fail of glory.

QUALIS est iste rerum humanarum eventuumque circulus! Nunquam sanè mutatione quâdam vacat conditio nostra; nec tamen in illâ mutatione nimia cernitur varietas. Dormimus, evigilamus; evigilamus, dormimus denuò; edimus, evacuamur; laboramus, non sine continuâ quâdam vicissitudine: ita tamen omnia disposuit ordinavitque infinita Dei sapientia, ut perpetuis hisce iterationibus parùm fatigemur; nec minùs alacres ingeramus nos quotidianis istis exercitationibus, quàm si semel in vitâ nobis forent transigendæ. Diurnis laboribus benè-fessus, quàm libenter exuo me, lectumque subeo! ante lucis dein matutinæ exortum, inquietioris lecti pertæsus, quanto libentiùs exurgo laboremque repeto!

Quidni ego magis appetam exuere corpusculum hoc, ut immortalitate super-induar? Quid enim aliud hoc est, nisi vestis intima; quam ubi semel deposuero, libertate fruitur anima mea ac quiete? Quoties decubui ego plenus spe nocturni refrigerii; tandem verò, post crebrarum volutationum tædia laterumque frustra commutatorum situs varios, surrexi insomnis, tristis, languidus. Ubi me extremùm hoc tandem exuero, non potest vel corpus hoc meum quiete, vel anima gaudio destitui; neutrum verò, ubi surrexero, gloriâ.

What hinders me, O God, but my infidelity, from longing for this happy dissolution? The world hath misery and toil enough, and heaven hath more than enough blessedness, to perfect my desires of that my last and glorious change. I believe Lord, help my unbelief.

Quid est, ô Deus, præter innatam quandam infidelitatem, quod me impedit ab hujus tam fœlicis dissolutionis ambitu? Sat habet mundus miseriæ ac molestiæ, satis superque habet cœlum beatitudinis, ad ciendum perficiendumque hujus ultimæ gloriosissimæque mutationis desiderium. *Credo Domine, adjuva incredulitatem meam.*

On the kindling of a charcoal fire. XXVI. *Visis carbonibus ignitis.*

THERE are not many creatures, but do naturally affect to diffuse and enlarge themselves. Fire and water will neither of them rest contented with their own bounds. Those little sparks, that I see in those coals, how they spread, and enkindle their next brands!

It is thus morally, both in good and evil: either of them dilates itself to their neighbourhood: but especially this is so much more apparent in evil, by how much we are more apt to take it. Let but some spark of heretical opinion be let fall upon some unstable, proud, busy spirit, it catcheth instantly, and fires the next capable subject: they two have easily inflamed a third; and now, the more society, the more speed and advantage of a public combustion. When we see the Church on a flame, it is too late to complain of the flint and steel. It is the holy wisdom of superiors, to prevent the dangerous attritions of stubborn and wrangling spirits; or to quench their first sparks, in the tinder. But why should not grace, and truth, be as successful in dilating itself, to the gaining of many hearts? Certainly, these are in them-

VIX quæ creaturarum omnium est, quæ naturali quodam instinctu non appetat diffundere se ac dilatare. Nec ignis nec aqua suis se terminis contineri sinit. Scintillulæ illæ, quæ in carbonibus istis cernuntur, quàm se exerunt, accenduntque proximas faces!

Identidem se habet moraliter, cùm in malo tum etiam in bono: utrunque horum se dilatat facilè, proximosque afficit: quod tamen in malo tanto magis conspicuum est, quanto nos illi fovendo prosequendo aptiores sumus. Ubi minima hæreticæ opinionis scintillula in animum instabilem, superbum, irrequietum inciderit, afficit illum illico, proximumque capax subjectum statim accendit: illi duo tertium subinde inflammant; jam verò, quanto major societas, tanto major publicæ combustionis et celeritas et intentio. Ubi Ecclesiam Dei videmus flammis miserè correptam, serò quidem de ferro et silice conquerimur. Illud superiorum sanctæ prudentiæ fuerit, periculosam pervicacium contentiosorumque animorum attritionem tempestivè præpedire; et primas quasque scintillulas, ubi exciderint, confestim extinguere. Quorsum

selves more winning, if our corruption had not made us indisposed to good.

O God, out of a holy envy and emulation at the speed of evil, I shall labour to enkindle others with these heavenly flames: it shall not be my fault, if they spread not.

verò non æquè prævaleat gratia, ac veritas, suos propagando terminos, ad plurimorum utilitatem ac salutem? Certè quidem, plus habent istæ in se illicii, nisi depravatio nostra nos nimis incapaces boni præstitisset.

O Deus, dum sacrâ quâdam invidiâ percitus æmulabor fœlicem nimis mali successum, dabo quantum potero operam, ut alii cœlestibus hisce flammis accendantur: quæ, si non latissimè se diffuderint, haud meâ profectò culpâ acciderit.

XXVII.

On the sight of a humble and patient beggar.

SEE what need can do! This man, who in so lowly a fashion croucheth to that passenger, hath in all likelihood as good a stomach, as he, to whom he thus abaseth himself; and, if their conditions were but altered, would look as high, and speak as big to him, whom he now answers with a plausible and dejected reverence.

It is thus betwixt God and us. He sees the way to tame us, is to hold us short of these earthly contentments. Even the savagest beasts are made quiet and docible, with want of food and rest.

O God, thou only knowest what I would do, if I had health, ease, abundance: do thou, in thy wisdom and mercy, so proportion thy gifts and restraints, as thou knowest best for my soul. If I be not humbled enough, let me want; and so order all my estate, that I may want any thing, save thyself,

Conspecto mendico humili ac mansueto.

ECCE modò quantum possit egestas! Homo iste, qui tam humiliter viatori illi prosternitur, sine dubio non minus habet stomachi, quàm is, cui adeo supplex provolvitur; et, si mutarentur fortè utriusque conditiones, æquè superciliosè despiceret, æquè fastidiosè alloqueretur hunc, quem nunc blandâ quâdam projectâque reverentiâ excipit.

Ita planè se habet inter Deum et nos. Videt ille nempe nullâ nos posse ratione meliùs domari, quàm rerum externarum penuriâ. Etiam bestiæ vel maximè efferæ, carentiâ tamen cibi ac quietis, cicures redduntur et capaces disciplinæ.

Tu solus nôsti, ô Deus, quid ego facerem, si modò mihi valetudo, requies, rerumque omnium copia suppeteret: tu ergò, pro infinitâ sapientiâ et misericordiâ tuâ, ita justâ quâdam proportione tuas sive largitiones sive coerciones dispensa, prout animæ meæ maximè expedire noveris. Si non adhuc humiliet satis, indigeam ulteriùs; et ita dispone res meas, ut nisi te uno, omnibus destituar.

On the sight of a crow pulling off wool from the back of a sheep.

XXVIII. *Conspectâ cornice velleris ovini lanam vellicante.*

How well these creatures know, whom they may be bold with! That crow durst not do this to a wolf or a mastiff. The known simplicity of this innocent beast gives advantage to this presumption.

Meekness of spirit commonly draws on injuries. The cruelty of ill natures usually seeks out those, not who deserve worst, but who will bear most. Patience and mildness of spirit is ill bestowed, where it exposes a man to wrong and insultation. Sheepish dispositions are best to others, worst to themselves. I could be willing to take injuries; but I will not be guilty, of provoking them by lenity: for harmlessness, let me go for a sheep; but, whosoever will be tearing my fleece, let him look to himself.

Quam probè norunt hæ creaturæ, quibuscum tutò ac fidenter agere liceat! Non audet cornix ista hoc facere lupo aut cani. Nota bestiæ hujusce insontis simplicitas ansam porrigit huic audaciæ.

Mitis quædam animi dispositio facilè proritat injurias. Pravorum ingeniorum crudelitas illos vulgò seligit, non qui pessimè merentur, sed qui plurimum pati volunt. Malè locantur patientia et mansuetudo animi, ubi contumeliæ insultationique hominem exponit. Ovinæ dispositiones optimæ aliis, sibi verò longè pessimæ sunt. Non illibenter equidem ferrem injurias; nollem tamen committere, ut eas lenitate meâ provocem: quod ad innocentiam, ovis sim videarve; at, si quis vellus meum dilaniare ac deglubere satagit, caveat is sibi.

On the sight of two snails.

XXIX. *Visis duobus limacibus.*

There is much variety, even in creatures of the same kind. See there two snails. One hath a house; the other wants it: yet both are snails; and it is a question whether case is the better. That, which hath a house, hath more shelter; but that, which wants it, hath more freedom. The privilege of that cover is but a burthen: you see if it have but a stone to climb over, with what stress it draws up that beneficial load; and, if the passage prove strait, finds no entrance. Whereas the empty snail makes no difference of way.

Quanta quàmque varia est, inter creaturas ejusdem speciei, diversitas! Ecce istìc duos limaces. Alter domum suam gestat; domo caret alter: limaces tamen ambo; nec utrius melior fit conditio facilè constat. Qui domum habet, plus habet tutelæ; qui domo caret, plus habet libertatis. Privilegium tecti illius cum magno onere conjunctum est: objiciatur modò lapis quispiam domiportæ illi necessariò adscendendus, quantâ cum difficultate beneficium illud pondus secum trahit onustus ille viator! quòd si paulò angustior fuerit via, nullus ingres-

Surely, it is always an ease, and sometimes a happiness, to have nothing. No man is so worthy of envy, as he, that can be cheerful in want.

sui locus conceditur. Ubi ille alter, vacuus, nulla sentit viarum discrimina.

Certè, semper quietus, aliquando et fœlix est, cui nihil suppetit. Nemo hominum invidendus est adeò, ac ille, qui in egestate potest esse alacris.

On the hearing of the street-cries in London.

XXX.

Auditis vendacium quorundam clamoribus platearibus.

WHAT a noise do these poor souls make, in proclaiming their commodities! Each tells what he hath, and would have all hearers take notice of it: and yet, God wot, it is but poor stuff, that they set out with so much ostentation. I do not hear any of the rich merchants talk of what bags he hath in his chests, or what treasures of rich wares in his storehouse: every man rather desires to hide his wealth; and, when he is urged, is ready to dissemble his ability.

No otherwise is it in the true spiritual riches: he, that is full of grace and good works, affects not to make shew of it to the world; but rests sweetly, in the secret testimony of a good conscience, and the silent applause of God's Spirit witnessing with his own; while, contrarily, the venditation of our own worth, or parts, or merits, argues a miserable indigence in them all.

O God, if the confessing of thine own gifts may glorify thee, my modesty shall not be guilty of a niggardly unthankfulness; but, for ought that concerns myself, I cannot be too secret. Let me so hide myself, that I may not wrong thee; and wise-

QUANTO cum strepitu, proclamant hi pauperculi merces suas! Narrat unusquisque quid sibi sit, vultque hoc auditoribus omnibus palam innotescat; et tamen, vilissima ilicet sunt ista, quæ tanto stridore venditant. Non audio ditiorum mercatorum quenquam publicè fateri quantum sibi in arcâ nummorum sit, aut quantæ rerum pretiosissimarum gazæ in secretis sibi repositoriis recondantur: unusquisque potiùs divitias suas celare cupit; et, ubi urgetur vehementiùs, facultates suas dissimulare studet.

Nec se habet aliter in veris, spiritualibus nimirum, opibus: qui plenus est gratiæ bonorumque operum, parùm curat ista mundo gloriosiùs ostentare; sed in secreto bonæ conscientiæ testimonio, tacitoque applausu Spiritûs Dei sibi attestantis, suaviter acquiescit; ubi, è contrà, propriæ dignitatis, facultatis, meritorumve venditatoria propalatio, miseram arguit horum omnium indigentiam.

O Deus, si donorum tuorum confessio gloriæ tuæ inservire possit, non committam ut modestia mea tenacis cujusdam ingratitudinis rea peragatur; sed, quod ad me ipsum attinet, non possum equidem nimis latere. Ita me fac abscondam, ut tibi

ly distinguish, betwixt thy praise and my own.

parùm injurius sim; et inter laudes tuas meique ipsius, prudenter discam distinguere.

On the flies gathering to a galled horse.

XXXI. *De muscis ad equini dorsi recrudescentis scabiem collectis.*

How these flies swarm to the galled part of this poor beast; and there sit, feeding upon that worst piece of his flesh, not meddling with the other sound parts of his skin!

Even thus do malicious tongues of detractors: if a man have any infirmity in his person or actions, that they will be sure to gather unto, and dwell upon; whereas, his commendable parts and well-deservings are passed by, without mention, without regard. It is an envious self-love and base cruelty, that causeth this ill disposition in men: in the mean time, this only they have gained; It must needs be a filthy creature, that feeds upon nothing but corruption.

Quàm frequentes ad misellæ hujus bestiæ saniosam plagam convolant muscæ; ibique sedent, purulentâ illâ carne se saginantes, reliquas saniores corporis partes ne attingentes quidem!

Sic planè faciunt invidæ detractorum linguæ: si vitiosi quid insit sive personæ cujusquam sive actionibus, istuc illico confluunt, huic insistunt; laude digna si qua sint et benè gesta, tacitè ista, omnia negligenterque præterire solent. Invidiosa certè philautia, cum pusillanimi quâdam crudelitate conjuncta, pravam hanc in hominibus dispositionem progignit: hoc, interim, solùm reportant malevoli isti; Non potest non esse animal turpissimum, quod solâ sanie pascitur.

On the sight of a dark lantern.

XXXII. *Ad conspectum laternæ secretæ quâdam duplicatione obscuratæ.*

There is light, indeed; but so shut up, as if it were not: and when the side is most open, there is light enough to give direction to him that bears it, none to others: he can discern another man, by that light, which is cast before him; but another man cannot discern him.

Right such is reserved knowledge: no man is the better for it, but the owner. There is no outward difference, betwixt concealed skill and ignorance: and, when such hidden knowledge

Lumen inibi est; ita tamen prorsùs occlusum, ac si non omnino esset: ubi verò latus apertum ostenditur, sat luminis exhibetur dirigendo viæ duci qui laternam portat, alii præterea nemini: ipse alium facilè discernit, beneficio illius lucis, quæ sibi projicitur; alius verò illum interea discernere non potest.

Talis omnino est reservata sibi scientia: nec, præter possessorem, quicquam cuiquam prodest. Inter celatam artem et ignorantiam, nullum externum discrimen est: et, ubi abscon-

will look forth, it casts so sparing a light, as may only argue it to have an unprofitable being; to have ability, without will to good; power to censure, none to benefit. The suppression or engrossing of those helps, which God would have us to impart, is but a thief's lantern in a true man's hand.

O God, as all our light is from thee, the Father of Lights; so make me no niggard of that poor rush-candle, thou hast lighted in my soul: make me more happy, in giving light to others, than in receiving it into myself.

dita hujusmodi eruditio foras dignatur prospicere, ita parcè lumen emittit suum, quasi publicam utilitatem omnem prorsùs declinaret; exhiberetque facultatem quandam, absque omni benè agendi voluntate; censuræ ergò, potiùs quàm communis beneficii. Adminicula nempe illa, quæ Deus aliis communicata voluit, nobis suppressa clanculùm ac retenta, quid aliud sunt nisi hæc, quæ furum solet esse propria, laterna, honesti hospitis manu gestata?

O Deus, cùm à te, Patre Luminum, lux omnis nostra sit; fac ne sim junceæ illius candelulæ, quam in animâ meâ accendisti, avarus dispensator: fac sim aliis impertiendo lumen, quàm recipiendo, fœlicior.

XXXIII.

On the hearing of a swallow in the chimney.

HERE is music, such as it is; but how long will it hold? When but a cold morning comes in, my guest is gone, without either warning or thanks. This pleasant season hath the least need of cheerful notes: the dead of winter shall want, and wish them in vain.

Thus doth an ungrateful parasite: no man is more ready to applaud and enjoy our prosperity; but, when with the times our condition begins to alter, he is a stranger at least. Give me that bird, which will sing in winter, and seek to my window in the hardest frost. There is no trial of friendship, but adversity. He, that is not ashamed of my bonds, not daunted with my checks, not alienated with my disgrace, is a friend for

Audito hirundinis cantu in camino suo.

ET hoc melodiæ quoddam genus est; quamdiu verò duraturum? Ubi frigescere cœperint matutini rores, abiit illico hospes hic meus, absque omni valedictione aut verò notitia. Jucunda hæc anni tempestas minimùm indiget suavi sonorum modulatione: quam hyems media frustrà desiderabit.

Ita facere solet ingratus parasitus: nemo paratior est res prosperas nobis gratulari, nemo illis fruitur nobiscum lubentiùs; sed, ubi unà cum temporibus mutari incipit conditio nostra, hospitem ille saltem rebus se nostris et inquilinum gerit. Cedo mihi avem, quæ durissimâ hyeme cantillat, et constrictissimo gelu petit fenestras meas. Una fornax amicitiæ, adversitas est. Quem non pudet vinculorum meorum, qui immerentis mei nec censuris de-

me: one dram of that man's love, is worth a world of false and inconstant formality.

jicitur, nec alienatur contumeliis, ille mihi amicus esto: vel unus scrupulus amoris, quo me iste talis prosequitur, plus apud me valebit, quàm mille pondo inconstantis simulatæque professionis.

On the sight of a fly burning itself in the candle.

XXXIV. *Conspectâ muscâ quâdam lucernæ flammâ se comburente.*

WISE Solomon says, *The light is a pleasant thing;* and so, certainly, it is: but there is no true outward light which proceeds not from fire. The light of that fire then is not more pleasing, than the fire of that light is dangerous: and that pleasure doth not more draw on our sight, than that danger forbids our approach. How foolish is this fly, that, in a love and admiration of this light, will know no distance; but puts itself heedlessly into that flame, wherein it perishes! How many bouts it fetched, every one nearer than other, ere it made this last venture! and now that merciless fire, taking no notice of the affection of an over-fond client, hath suddenly consumed it.

Thus do those bold and busy spirits, who will needs draw too near unto that inaccessible light, and look into things too wonderful for them: so long do they hover about the secret counsels of the Almighty, till the wings of their presumptuous conceits be scorched; and their daring curiosity hath paid them with everlasting destruction.

O Lord, let me be blessed with the knowledge, of what thou hast revealed: let me content myself to adore thy Divine Wisdom, in what thou hast not re-

Lux, inquit sapientissimus ille Solomon, *jucunda res est;* et, certè, sic nos facilè comperimus: attamen externum lumen nullum est, quod non ab igne proficiscitur. Lumen autem illius ignis non magis jucundum est, quàm ignis illius luminis periculosus: neque magis visum nostrum allicit illius voluptas, quàm hujus periculum approximationem vetat. Quàm fatua est musca hæc, quæ, præ lucis amore ac admiratione, distantiæ tutamen nulla vel scire vel servare voluit; sed ingerit se temerè huic, quâ periit, flammæ! Per quot gyros, singulos singulis proximiores, ante ultimum hunc ausum, circuiit! nunc verò immitis flamma, parùm agnoscens blanduli clientis affectum, subitò illam absumpsit.

Ita faciunt curiosa illa et audacia ingenia, quæ ad lucem Divinæ Majestatis inaccessibilem propiùs quàm par est accedere non verentur, resque nimis altas stupendasque scrutari malunt: tam diu nempe isti secreta Omnipotentis consilia incautè circumvolitant, donec audentes animorum alæ comburantur; et ipsi, æternâ pernicie, insanam curiositatem luant.

Bea me, ô Deus, rerum illarum notitiâ, quæ tu revelare voluisti: contentus sim ego adorare Divinam Sapientiam tuam, in iis quæ parùm revelasti. Ita luce

vealed. So let me enjoy thy light, that I may avoid thy fire.

tuâ fruar, ut ignem tuum interea evitem.

On the sight of a lark flying up. XXXV. *Conspectâ alaudâ sursum volitante.*

How nimbly doth that little lark mount up, singing towards heaven, in a right line! whereas the hawk, which is stronger of body and swifter of wing, towers up, by many gradual compasses, to his highest pitch. That bulk of body, and length of wing, hinders a direct ascent; and requires the help, both of air and scope, to advance his flight; while that small bird cuts the air without resistance, and needs no outward furtherance of her motion.

Quàm agili celerique pennâ pusilla hæc alauda, rectâ quidem lineâ, cœlum versus cantillans ascendit! ubi accipiter, cui robur corporis majus et ala celerior, per multas circumgyrationes, ascensûs sui fastigium gradatim tandem assequitur. Nempe illa corporis moles alarumque longitudo impedimento sunt, quo minùs rectà possit ascendere; quandoquidem istud, et aliquod aeris adminiculum et idoneum volatui promovendo spatium, requirat; ubi minima ilia avicula absque omni reluctatione aërem liberè findit, nec quo indiget externo motûs sui adjumento.

It is no otherwise with the souls of men, in flying up to their heaven. Some are hindered by those powers, which would seem helps, to their soaring up thither: great wit, deep judgment, quick apprehension, send men about, with no small labour, for the recovery of their own incumbrance; while the good affections of plain and simple souls raise them up immediately to the fruition of God. Why should we be proud of that, which may slacken our way to glory? Why should we be disheartened with the small measure of that, the very want whereof may (as the heart may be affected) facilitate our way to happiness?

Nec se habet aliter cum hominum animabus, cœlum suum repetentibus. Non desunt, quæ suis iisdem facultatibus, quibus accelerari posse videretur fœlix hic cursus, haud parùm retardantur: ingenium fortasse igneum, profundum judicium, apprehensio facilis, ita nimis multos præpediit, ut necesse illis fuerit, suam ipsorum remorationem, non parvo labore, redimere; ubi boni adfectus honestas simplicesque animas immediatè evehunt ad suum cœlum, Deoque liberè frui jubent. Quorsum verò efferri nos patimur illis dotibus, quæ nostram ad gloriam iter retardare possunt? Quorsum, è contrà, dejicimur tenuitate aut paucitate donorum illorum, quorum absentia (quæ cordis nostri esse potest affectio) ad beatitudinem facilitare nobis viam potest?

On the singing of the birds in a spring morning

XXXVI. *Auditis aviculis verno quodam mane cantillantibus.*

How cheerfully do these little birds chirp and sing, out of the natural joy they conceive, at the approach of the sun and entrance of the spring; as if their life had departed, and returned with those glorious and comfortable beams!

No otherwise is the penitent and faithful soul affected to the true Sun of Righteousness, the Father of Lights. When he hides his face, it is troubled, and silently mourns away that sad winter of affliction: when he returns, in his presence is the fulness of joy; no song is cheerful enough, to welcome him.

O thou, who art the God of all Consolation, make my heart sensible of the sweet comforts of thy gracious presence; and let my mouth ever shew forth thy praise.

Quàm alacriter modulantur hæ aviculæ ac cantillant, præ nativo quodam gaudio, quod, appropinquante jam sole vereque novo intrante, conceperunt; quasi vita ipsarum et discessisset unà, et unà etiam cum beneficiis illis radiis rediisset!

Vero Justitiæ Sole, Patre Luminum, non aliter afficitur anima fidelis pœnitensque. Ubi ille faciem suam abscondit, gravissimè perturbatur, tristemque afflictionis tantæ hyemen silenti quodam planctu consumit: ubi ille tandem redierit, in presentiâ ejus plenitudo est gaudii; nulla satis alacris est cantilena, quâ illi reduci gratulemur.

O tu, qui Consolationis omnis Deus es, inde cordi meo sensum suavissimarum delectationum dulcissimæ præsentiæ tuæ; facitoque ut os meum laudem tuam canorè eloquatur.

On a coal covered with ashes.

XXXVII. *Ad conspectum prunæ cineribus coopertæ.*

NOTHING appears in this heap, but dead ashes: here is neither light, nor smoke, nor heat; and yet, when I stir up these embers to the bottom, there are found some living gleeds, which do both contain fire, and are apt to propagate it.

Many a Christian's breast is like this hearth. No life of grace appears there, for the time; either to his own sense, or to the apprehension of others: while the season of temptation lasteth, all seems cold and dead: yet still, at the worst, there is a secret coal from the altar of

IN cumulo hoc toto nihil quicquam apparet, præter meras favillas: neque lux istìc est, neque fumus, nec calor; et tamen, ubi excito hosce cineres, vivi quidam carbones inibi reperiuntur, qui ignem et continent, et propagare apti sunt.

Non pauca Christianorum pectora instar foci hujusce sunt. Nulla, pro tempore, in illis gratiæ vita apparet; sive sensui suo, sive judicio aliorum: durante tentationis impetu, frigida videntur omnia planèque emortua: adhuc tamen, ubi pessimo in statu res ipsorum sunt, prunæ

heaven raked up in their bosom; which, upon the gracious motions of the Almighty, doth both bewray some remainders of that divine fire, and is easily raised to a perfect flame. Nothing is more dangerous, than to judge by appearances. Why should I deject myself, or censure others, for the utter extinction of that Spirit; which doth but hide itself in the soul, for a glorious advantage?

quædam secretæ ac altari cœlesti accensæ in illorum sinu absconditæ latent; quæ, salutaribus Spiritûs Sancti motibus, erutæ et afflatæ, reliquias quasdam præ se ferunt divini ignis, tandemque facilè ad perfectam usque flammam excitantur. Nihil periculosius est, quàm ex specie externâ judicare. Quare aut me dejicerem ipse, aut alios censurâ notarem, quasi Spiritum omnino extinxissent; ubi ille retraxerit se modò aliquantisper, inque pectore intimo abdiderit, ut se tandem magis gloriosum præsentemque exhibeat.

XXXVIII.

On the sight of a Blackmoor.

Conspecto Æthiope.

Lo, there is a man, whose hue shews him to be far from home: his very skin bewrays his climate. It is night in his face, while it is day in ours. What a difference there is in men, both in their fashion and colour; and yet all children of one Father! Neither is there less variety in their insides: their dispositions, judgments, opinions differ as much, as their shapes and complexions. That, which is beauty to one, is deformity to another: we should be looked upon, in this man's country, with no less wonder and strange coyness than he is here: our whiteness would pass there, for an unpleasing indigestion of form. Outward beauty is more in the eye of the beholder, than in the face that is seen. In every colour, that is fair, which pleaseth: the very Spouse of Christ can say, *I am black, but comely.*

This is our colour spiritually: yet the eye of our gracious God and Saviour, can see that beauty

Ecce homo, cujus color satis indicat eum longè abesse domo: ex ipsâ cute regionem ipsius facilè intelligimus. In illius facie nox est, ubi in nostrâ dies. Quantum homo homini distat, et formis et coloribus; omnes tamen interea ejusdem Patris filii sumus! Neque minor animorum varietas est: dispositiones, judicia, opiniones hominum non minùs profectò distant, quàm figuræ ac temperamenta. Quod huic pulchrum, illi videtur deforme: et nos, in istius hominis patriâ, pari stupore ac fastidio adspiceremur: decorus iste, qui nobis videtur faciei candor, non aliud illis, quàm cruda quædam formæ indigestio censeretur. Pulchritudo externa in spectantis oculo potius, quàm in spectati formâ collocatur. Color, quicunque fuerit, pulchrum est quod placet: etiam ipsa Christi Sponsa de se fassa est, *nigram esse se, sed decoram tamen.*

Hic idem spiritualiter color nostri omnium est: oculus tamen benignissimi Dei et Servatoris

in us, wherewith he is delighted. The true Moses marries a Blackmoor; Christ, his Church. It is not for us to regard the skin, but the soul. If that be innocent, pure, holy, the blots of an outside cannot set us off from the love of him, who hath said, *Behold, thou art fair, my Sister, my Spouse:* if that be foul and black, it is not in the power of an angelical brightness of our hide, to make us other, than a loathsome eye-sore to the Almighty.

O God, make my inside lovely to thee: I know that beauty will hold; while weather, casualty, age, disease, may deform the outer man, and mar both colour and feature.

nostri, pulchritudinem illam, quâ maximè delectatur, in nobis conspicari profitetur. Verus Moses ducit Ethiopissam; Christus, Ecclesiam. Non est quod nos cutem curemus, sed animam. Illa si innocens, pura, sancta fuerit, externæ cutis rugæ ac maculæ parùm amovere poterunt amorem illius, qui dixit, *Ecce, formosa es, mea Soror, et Sponsa; ecce, formosa es:* quòd si illa turpis et atra fuerit, non est penes angelicam corii nostri formam ac splendorem, præstare nos quicquam aliud, quàm exosum horrendumque Deo spectaculum.

O Deus, animam meam facito pulchram tibi ac spectabilem: novi sat benè intimam illam formam usque duraturam; dum cœlum, casus, ætas, morbus, fœdare exteriorem hunc hominem, et tam colores quàm lineamenta omnia deformare, facilè poterunt.

XXXIX.

On the small stars in the Galaxy, or milky circle, in the firmament.

WHAT a clear lightsomeness there is, in yonder circle of the heaven, above the rest! What can we suppose the reason of it, but that the light of many smaller stars is united there, and causes that constant brightness? And yet those small stars are not discerned; while the splendor, which ariseth from them, is so notably remarkable.

In this lower heaven of ours, many a man is made conspicuous, by his good qualities and deserts: but I most admire the humility and grace of those, whose virtues and merits are usefully visible, while their persons are obscure. It is secretly

Visâ Galaxiâ, minimisque in eâ stellulis.

QUANTA clarìtudo ac splendor, in illo cœli circulo, supra reliquos quosque orbes, cernitur! Unde hoc evenire arbitramur, nisi forsan ex eo, quòd multarum minutiorum stellarum lumen ibi uniatur, constantemque hunc nitorem efficiat? Illæ tamen minutiores stellæ non discernantur interea; dum splendor, ab illis profectus, ita insigniter conspicuus est.

In cœlo hoc inferiore, multi sunt, qui, dotibus egregiis meritisque, in hominum notitiam deveniunt: ego verò illorum humilitatem ac gratiam plurimùm admirari soleo, quorum virtutes ac benè-gesta utilitati publicæ maximè conducere cernuntur,

glorious, for a man to shine unseen. Doubtless, it is the height, that makes those stars so small and invisible: were they lower, they would be seen more. There is no true greatness, without a self-humiliation. We shall have made an ill use of our advancement, if, by how much higher we are, we do not appear less: if our light be seen, it matters not for our hiding.

dum ipsorum personæ obscuræ delitescunt. Secretè gloriosum est, nemini visum splendere interim. Nimia, proculdubio, altitudo est, quæ facit ut vel omnino non videantur stellæ illæ, aut videantur minimæ: quæ si inferiùs paulò demitterentur, majores apparerent. Nulla vera magnitudo est, absque intrinsecâ quâdam humiliatione sui. Provectione nostrâ utemur pessimè, si, quanto altiùs elevamur, tanto minores non videamur: parùm refert abscondi nos, dum lumen nostrum palam cernitur.

On the sight of boys playing. XL. *Viso puerorum ludo.*

EVERY age hath some peculiar contentment. Thus we did, when we were of these years. Methinks, I still remember the old fervor of my young pastimes. With what eagerness and passion, do they pursue these childish sports! Now that there is a handful of cherry-stones at the stake, how near is that boy's heart to his mouth, for fear of his play-fellows next cast; and how exalted with desire and hope of his own speed! Those great unthrifts, who hazard whole manors upon the dice, cannot expect their chance with more earnestness, or entertain it with more joy or grief.

We cannot but now smile, to think of these poor and foolish pleasures of our childhood. There is no less disdain, that the regenerate man conceives of the dearest delights of his natural condition. He was once jolly and jocund, in the fruition of

TRAHIT sua quamque ætatem voluptas. Ita fecimus et nos, hoc ætatis. Videor equidem mihi, jam nunc veterem puerilium ludorum fervorem recèns recordari. Quàm acriter quantoque passionum impetu, prosequuntur pueruli isti ludicra hæc exercitia! Vide mihi puerum illum, ubi totus calculorum manipulus jam pignori sistitur, quàm cor illi ferè in os insilit, præ formidine proximi jactûs; quàmque desiderio ac spe proprii successûs nimiùm exaltatur! Certè, magni illi nepotum gurgites, qui quicquid est patrimonii alearum fortunæ totum committere audent, casum illum decretorium, aut vehementiùs expectare, aut majore cum gaudio doloreve accipere nequeunt.

Non possumus non ridere modò, ubi subit animum tam futilium fatuarumque pueritiæ nostræ delectationum recordatio. Nec minore profectò fastidio, renatus homo vel charissimas naturalis conditionis voluptates prosequi solet. Hilari olim so-

the world. Feasts, and revels, and games, and dalliance were his life; and no man could be happy without these; and scarce any man, but himself: but when once grace hath made him both good and wise, how scornfully doth he look back at these fond felicities of his carnal estate! Now he finds more manly, more divine contentments; and wonders he could be so transported, with his former vanity. Pleasures are much according as they are esteemed: one man's delight, is another man's pain. Only spiritual and heavenly things can settle and satiate the heart, with a full and firm contentation.

lutoque animo, solebat ille mundo frui. Convivia, comessationes, ludi, lascivi gestus, obscœnitatesque cordi huic fuerant priùs; nec quem sine istis fœlicem esse posse autumabat; vix verò, præter seipsum, alium quempiam: ubi autem salutaris Dei gratia et probum hunc reddidit et prudentem, quàm fastidiosè despicit hic insulsas carnalis suæ conditionis fœlicitates! Delectationes nunc alias magis viriles, imò divinas magis persentiscit; miraturque potuisse se olim juvencm, vanis hisce voluptatum blandimentis abripi. Ita se plerunque habent voluptates prout æstimantur: quod huic volupe est, cordolio est illi. Sola spiritualia ac cœlestia, firmâ solidâque contentatione, et stabilire animum possunt et satiare.

O God, thou art not capable, either of bettering, or of change: let me enjoy thee; and I shall pity the miserable fickleness of those, that want thee; and shall be sure to be constantly happy.

Tu solus, ô Deus mi, capax non es, aut emendationis cujuscunque aut mutationis: liceat mihi te uno frui; miserebor ego seriò infœlicissmæ illorum, qui te carent, instabilitatis; certusque ero semper constantissmæ beatitudinis.

On the sight of a spider and her web.

XLI. *Ad conspectum araneæ telam suam exordientis.*

How justly do we admire the curious work of this creature! What a thread, doth it spin forth! What a web, doth it weave! Yet it is full of deadly poison. There may be much venom, where is much art.

Quàm meritò admirari solemus curiosas nimis animalculi hujusce operas! Quàm tenue filum est, quod educit protrahitque! Qualis hæc, quam texit, tela! Ipsa tamen bestiola mortifero veneno plena. Toxici esse potest plurimum, ubi multum est artis.

Just like to this is a learned and witty heretic. Fine conceits and elegant expressions fall from him; but his opinions and secretly-couched doctrines are dangerous and mortal. Were not

Similis planè huic doctus est ingeniosusque hæreticus. Acutissimi fortè conceptus, verba acutissima excidere illi possunt; quæ tamen venditat dogmata, secretique doctrinæ apices, peri-

that man strangely foolish, who, because he likes the artificial drawing out of that web, would therefore desire to handle or eat the spider that made it? Such should be our madness, if our wonder at the skill of a false teacher should cast us into love with his person, or familiarity with his writings. There can be no safety in our judgment or affection, without a wise distinction; in the want whereof, we must needs wrong God or ourselves: God, if we acknowledge not what excellent parts, he gives to any creature; ourselves, if, upon the allowance of those excellencies, we swallow their most dangerous enormities.

culosi læthalesque planè sunt. Annon insaniret ille planissimè, quisquis esset, qui, ex eo quòd miro telæ hujus artificio plurimùm delectatur, opificem araneolam, vel manu tractare, vel ore manducare discuperet? Pariter desiperemus et nos, si, dum falsi doctoris artem quamcunque mirabundi suspicimus, aut ipsum authorem deperire, aut scripta illius familiariter pertractare, non vereremur. Tuti profectò esse non possumus, sive judicia nostra spectemus sive affectus, absque prudenti quàdam rerum ac personarum discriminatione; sine quâ, fieri sanè non potest, quin et Deo injurii simus et nobis ipsis: Deo quidem, nisi egregias illas dotes, quibus creaturas ornavit suas, libenter agnoscamus; nobis, si, dum præcellentes illarum facultates approbamus, unà etiam vitia quæque perniciosissima imbibamus.

XLII.

On the sight of a natural. *Conspecto morione quodam.*

O God, why am not I thus? What hath this man done, that thou hast denied wit to him? or, what have I done, that thou shouldest give a competency of it to me? What difference is there betwixt us, but thy bounty; which hath bestowed upon me, what I could not merit; and hath withheld from him, what he could not challenge? All is, O God, in thy good pleasure, whether to give or deny.

Neither is it otherwise, in matter of grace. The unregenerate man is a spiritual fool: no man is truly wise, but the renewed. How is it, that, while I see another man besotted with the vanity and corruption of his nature, I have attained to know

O Deus, unde fit quòd ego talis non sim? Quid fecit iste homo, quòd tu illi intellectum negaveris? aut, quid feci ego, quòd modum ejus saltem aliquem mihi indulseris? Quid inter nos discriminis est, præter tuam solius bonitatem; qui mihi largitus es, quod mereri nullus poteram; illique denegaveris, quod nullâ potuerat ratione vendicare? Seu dare seu detinere etiam, tui solius, ô Domine, beneplaciti est.

Neque aliter, se habet, in re gratiæ. Irregenitus quisque merus est morio spiritualis: nec quis, præter renatum, verè sapit. Unde fit, quòd, cùm alium aspiciam vanitate pravitateque naturæ suæ prorsùs infatuatum, ipse interim cognitionem Dei

God and the great mystery of salvation; to abhor those sins, which are pleasing to a wicked appetite? Who hath discerned me?

Nothing, but thy free mercy, O my God. Why else was I a man; not a brute beast? why right shaped; not a monster? why perfectly limbed; not a cripple? why well-sensed; not a fool? why well-affected; not graceless? why a vessel of honour; not of wrath? If ought be not ill in me, O Lord, it is thine. Oh let thine be the praise; and mine the thankfulness.

magnorumque salutis mysteriorum fuerim assecutus; didicerimque ab illis peccatis, quæ pessimo hominum malorum appetitui perplacere solent, penitùs abhorrere? Quis me tandem discrevit?

Nihil quicquàm, præter tuam unius liberrimam misericordiam, O Deus. Quorsum ego aliàs homo sum; nôn brutum? quorsum rectè formatus; et non monstrum potiùs? quare corpore integro; non mancus? quare sensibus ac judicio præditus; non fatuus? quare probè affectus; non destitutus gratiâ? quare vas honoris; non iræ? Si quid in me non mali sit, tuum est, ô Domine. Tu tibi laudem habe ac gratias; da mihi interim gratitudinem.

On the loadstone and the jet. XLIII. *Viso magnete et gagate.*

As there is a civil commerce amongst men, for the preservation of human society; so there is a natural commerce, which God hath set amongst the other creatures, for the maintenance of their common being. There is scarce any thing therefore in nature, which hath not a power of attracting some other. The fire draws vapours to it; the sun draws the fire: plants draw moisture; the moon draws the sea: all purgative things draw their proper humours. A natural instinct draws all sensitive creatures to affect their own kind; and, even in those things which are of imperfect mixtion, we see this experimented: so, as the senseless stones and metals are not void of this active virtue: the loadstone draws iron; and the jet, rather than nothing, draws up straws and dust. With what

Ut ad humanæ societatis conservationem, civile quoddam est inter homines commercium; ita et naturale commercii genus, inter creaturas reliquas ordinavit Deus, ad communem conservationem universi. Vix quicquam in rerum naturâ est, quod non nativâ quâdam alterius cujuspiam attrahendi potentiâ imbuatur. Ignis vapores ad se trahit; sol, ignem: humiditatem attrahunt plantæ; luna, mare: purgativa quæque proprios sibi attrahunt humores. Naturalis quidam instinctus sensitiva quæque inclinat ad amorem ambitumque generis sui; quin etiam, in ipsis imperfectè mistis, hoc usu venire quotidiè experimur: adeò ut, vel lapides ac metalla, quæ sensu omni carent, activâ tamen hâc virtute neutiquam carere facilè intelligamus: magnes ferrum attrahit; gagates, ne nihil attrahere

a force, do both these stones work upon their several subjects! Is there any thing more heavy, and unapt for motion, than iron, or steel? yet these do so run to their beloved loadstone, as if they had the sense of a desire and delight; and do so cling to the point of it, as if they had forgotten their weight for this adherence. Is there any thing more apt for dispersion, than small straws and dust? yet these gather to the jet, and so sensibly leap up to it, as if they had a kind of ambition to be so preferred.

videretur paleam ac pulverem allicit: Quanto verò impetu, lapidum istorum uterque in proprium sibi quisque objectum operatur! Quicquamne aut gravius est, aut motui minùs aptum, quàm chalybs, aut ferrum? ita tamen ista ad dilectum sibi magnetem accurrunt, quasi quendam haberent desiderii delectationisque sensum; atque ita extremo illius punctulo arctè adhærent, ac si ponderis sui oblita fuissent præ contactûs hujusce voluptate. Quicquamne dissipationi aptius, quàm palea ac pulvisculus? ita tamen ista ad gagatem colliguntur, atque ita illi palam adsilire cernuntur, quasi ambitione quâdam provectionis hujusce ducerentur.

Methinks I see in these two a mere emblem of the hearts of men, and their spiritual attractives. The grace of God's Spirit, like the true loadstone or adamant, draws up the iron heart of man to it; and holds it in a constant fixedness of holy purposes and good actions: the World, like the jet, draws up the sensual hearts of light and vain men; and holds them fast in the pleasures of sin.

In duobus hisce videor mihi videre justum emblema cordis humani, virtutisque spiritualis ejusdem utrinque attractivæ. Spiritûs Sancti gratia, instar veri magnetis adamantisve, ferrea hominum pectora ad se trahit; firmâque quâdam sanctarum cogitationum bonarumque actionum constantiâ retinet: Mundus, ad instar gagatis, carnalia levium ac vanorum hominum corda ad se attrahit; vitiosisque peccatorum delinimentis sibi retentat.

I am thine iron, O Lord; be thou my loadstone. *Draw thou me, and I shall run after thee. Knit my heart unto thee, that I may fear thy Name.*

Tuus sum*, ô Deus; esto tu magnes meus. *Trahe me, et ego post te curram. Aduni cor meum tibi, ut reverear Nomen tuum.*

XLIV. *On hearing of music by night.* *Ad concentum musicum nocturnum.*

How sweetly doth this music sound, in this dead season! In the day-time, it would not, it

Quàm suaviter, intempestâ hâc nocte, sonat concentus iste! De die, sic aurem afficere nec solet,

* *Chalybs* was probably omitted here, by an error of the press, in the original edition.—EDITOR.

could not so much affect the ear. All harmonious sounds are advanced by a silent darkness.

Thus it is with the glad tidings of salvation. The Gospel never sounds so sweet, as in the night of persecution or of our own private affliction. It is ever the same: the difference is, in our disposition to receive it.

O God, whose praise it is to *give Songs in the night*, make my prosperity conscionable, and my crosses cheerful.

nec potest quidem. Harmonici omnes soni lentæ noctis caligine longè jucundiores haberi solent.

Sic se planè habet cum læto salutis nuncio. Nunquam ita suaviter sonat Evangelium, ac obscurissimâ vel persecutionum publicarum vel propriæ afflictionis nocte. Illud semper idem est: in nostrâ, qui tantum beneficium recipimus, dispositione, unicum discrimen est.

O mi Deus, cujus summa laus est *dare Cantica de nocte*, prosperas res meas facito pias et sanctas, adversas verò alacres.

On the fanning of corn.

XLV. *Ad conspectum tritici ventilati.*

See how, in the fanning of this wheat, the fullest and greatest grains lie ever the lowest; and the lightest take up the highest place.

It is no otherwise, in morality: those, which are most humble, are fullest of grace; and, ofttimes, those have most conspicuity, which have the least substance. To affect obscurity or submission, is base and suspicious; but that man, whose modesty presents him mean to his own eyes and lowly to others, is commonly secretly rich in virtue. Give me rather a low fulness, than an empty advancement.

Ubi ventilatur triticum hoc, granorum maximum ac solidissimum semper imum petere video; levissimum quodque superiorem locum sortiri.

In re morum, pariter se habet: plenissimi gratiæ, humillimi plerunque sunt; et ii, sæpenumerò, maximè omnium conspicui sunt, quibus minimum suppetit. Obscuritatem quandam dejectionemque, aut ambire aut simulare, sordidum est et suspicione plenissimum; ille verò, cujus modestia mediocrem suis se oculis exhibet, humilem alienis, plerunque virtutum omnium intimè ditissimus est. Humilis mihi plenitudo sit potiùs, quàm elatio vacua.

On herbs dried.

XLVI. *De herbis exiccatis.*

They say those herbs will keep best, and will longer retain both their hue and verdure, which are dried thus in the shade; than those, which are suddenly scorched with fire or sun.

Those wits are like to be most

Herbas illas aiunt servari commodissimè, longiùsque et colorem et saporem retinere, quæ sub umbrâ paulatim arefiunt; quàm quæ subito sive solis sivè ignis calore exiccantur torrenturque.

Firmiora sunt ingenia illa diu-

durable, which are closely tutored with a leisurely education: time, and gentle constancy, ripens better, than a sudden violence. Neither is it otherwise, in our spiritual condition: a wilful slackness is not more dangerous, than an over-hastening of our perfection: if I may be every moment drawing nearer to the end of my hope, I shall not wish to precipitate.

tiùsque duratura, quæ lentâ quâdam educatione obscurè instituuntur: tempus et facilis quædam studiorum constantia ad maturitatem perducunt longè meliùs, quàm subitus laborum impetus. In spirituali conditione nostrâ, idem planè usuvenit: affectata quædam lentitudo parùm periculosior est, quàm nimia perfectionis acceleratio: ubi me momentis singulis ad spei meæ terminum tantò magis appropinquare sensero, non est quòd præcipitare discupiam.

On the quenching of iron in water.

XLVII. *Audito ferri extincti stridore.*

HARK how that iron, quenched in the water, hisseth; and makes that noise, which, while it was cold or dry, it would never make.

We cannot quench hot and unruly desires in youth, without some mutiny and rebellious opposition. Corruptions cannot be subdued, without some reluctation; and that reluctation cannot be, without some tumult: after some short noise, and smoke, and bubbling, the metal is quiet; and holds to the form, whereinto it is beaten.

O God, why should it trouble me, to find my good endeavours resisted, for the little brunt of a change; while I am sure, this insurrection shall end in a happy peace?

AUDI modò quàm ferrum illud, aquâ extinctum, canore sibilat; stridoremque illum edit, quem frigidum priùs siccumque, facere non potuerat.

Fervidos inordinatosque appetitus adolescentiæ, absque querulo quodam murmure rebellique oppositione, extinguere non possumus. Debellari non possunt vitia nostra, absque reluctatione validâ; nec tumultu aliquo, vacare potest illa reluctatio: post tantillum soni, fumi, ebullitionisque, quiescit metallum hoc; formamque, in quam fabri ictibus redigitur, usque servat.

Quorsum ægrè mihi foret, ô Deus, quòd sentiam pios conatus meos, pro minimo mutationis meæ spatiolo, repugnantiam quandam pati; quandoquidem certus sim, seditionem hanc in fœlicissimâ pace deinceps desituram?

On a fair coloured fly.

XLVIII. *Visis muscis quibusdam pulchrè coloratis, quas cantharidas appellare solemus.*

WHAT a pleasant mixture of colours there is in this fly! and yet,

Quàm pulchra colorum mistura in muscâ hâc cernitur! nulla ta-

they say, no fly is so venomous as this; which, by the outward touch of the hand, corrodes the inmost passages of the body.

It is no trusting to colours and shapes: we may wonder at their excellency, without dotage upon their beauty. Homeliness makes less shew, and hath less danger. Give me inward virtue and usefulness: let others care for outward glory.

men, uti aiunt, in toto muscarum genere æquè venenosa est; ita ut, vel extimo manûs contactu, interna corporis viscera corrodat.

Non est quòd aut coloribus fidamus aut formis: illorum quidem præstantiam ita licet admirari, ut venustate non fascinemur interim. Humilis simplicitas minùs præ se fert, minus tamen habet periculi. Cedo mihi internam virtutem utilitatemque: externum gloriæ splendorem curent alii.

On a glow-worm.

XLIX.

Conspectâ noctilucâ vel cicindelâ.

WHAT a cold candle is lighted up, in the body of this sorry worm! There needs no other disproof of those, that say there is no light at all without some heat. Yet sure, an outward heat helps on this cool light: never did I see any of these bright worms, but in the hot months of summer: *in cold seasons*, either they are not, or appear not; when the nights are both darkest, and longest, and most uncomfortable.

QUALIS lucerna frigidiuscula quidem illa, in corpore vermiculi hujus accenditur! Non aliâ opus est illorum confutatione, qui nullum omnino lumen absque calore aliquo esse arbitrantur. Certè tamen, externus calor gelidum hoc lumen reddit illustrius: nusquam vidi ego nitedularum istarum aliquam, nisi æstivis calidioribus scilicet mensibus resplendentem: frigidis anni tempestatibus, ubi et obscuriores, et longiores, et tristiores sunt noctes, nullæ aut sunt, aut certè apparent saltem.

Thus do false-hearted Christians: in the warm and lightsome times of free and encouraged profession, none shine more than they: in hard and gloomy seasons of restraint and persecution, all their formal light is either lost or hid. Whereas true professors, either, like the sun, shine ever alike; or, like the stars, shine fairest in the frostiest nights. The light of this worm is for some shew, but for no use: any light, that is attended with heat, can impart itself to others, though with the expence of that subject

Ita faciunt hypocritæ Christiani: fervidis lucidisque liberæ approbatæque professionis temporibus, nemo illis lucet magis: tempestatibus verò duris tristibusque sive interdictionis sive persecutionis publicæ, simulata horum lux omnis aut periit aut certè latuit. Ubi veri quique professores, aut, instar solis, æquè semper lucent; aut, stellarum instar, gelidissimis noctibus maximè resplendent scintillantque. Noctilucæ hujusce lumen speciem quandam præ se fert, usui inservit nulli: lux omnis, quæ à ca-

wherein it is; this doth neither waste itself, nor help others. I would rather never to have light, than not to have it always: I would rather not to have light, than not to communicate it.

lore proficiscitur, communicare se aliis potest, quanquam non sine subjecti cui inest diminutione continuâ; ista verò neque se absumit, neque alios quicquam adjuvat. Malo nunquam, quàm non semper lucere: nullum habere lumen malo, quàm non aliis quod habeo impertire.

On the shutting of one eye.

L. *Conspecto quodam oculum unum claudente.*

When we would take aim, or see most exquisitely, we shut one eye.

Thus must we do with the eyes of our soul. When we would look most accurately with the eye of faith, we must shut the eye of reason: else, the visual beams of these two apprehensions will be crossing each other, and hinder our clear discerning. Yea, rather let me pull out this right eye of reason, than it shall offend me, in the interruptions of my happy visions of God.

Ubi collimare aliquò velimus, aut cernere accuratiùs, oculum unum claudimus.

Ita et animi oculis facere solemus. Ubi fidei oculo exquisitissimè intueri volumus, rationis oculum interea claudimus: aliter fieri non potest, quin ut visuales radii, qui utrique harum apprehensioni inservire debeant, transversi sibi incidant, visionisque actum impediant. Imò, dextrum hunc rationis oculum eruam ego potiùs, quàm, ut intercipiendo beatificam Dei mei visionem, offendiculo mihi sit.

On a spring-water.

LI. *Conspecto fonte.*

How this spring smoketh; while other greater channels are frozen up! this water is living; while they are dead. All experience teacheth us, that well-waters, arising from deep springs, are hotter in winter than in summer: the outward cold doth keep in and double their inward heat.

Such is a true Christian, in the evil day: his life of grace gets more vigour, by opposition: he had not been so gracious, if the times had been better. I will not say, he may thank his ene-

Quantum verò fumum edit fons iste; ubi ampliores quique canales gelu constricti obrigescunt! viva est hæc aqua; aliis interim emortuis. Illud nos experientia omnes docet, fontanas aquas, quæ à scaturiginibus profundioribus oriuntur, hyeme calidiores semper quàm æstate profluere: intrinsecam nempe calorem repercutit duplicatque frigus externum.

Talis est verus quisque Christianus, in die malo: illa, quâ imbuitur gratiæ vita, oppugnando vigorem acquirit: neque ita sanctus fuisset iste, si in meliora tempora incidisset. Nolo dicere,

mies; but I must say, he may thank God for his enemies.

O God, what can put out that heat, which is increased with cold? How happy shall I be, if I may grow so much more in grace, as the world in malice!

eum hoc nomine gratias debere inimicis; certè dico, eum pro inimicis gratias debere Deo.

O Deus, quid tandem restinguere potest ignem illum, qui frigore intenditur? Quàm ego fœlix ero, si quantum mundus livore ac malitiâ, tantum ego gratiâ accrevero.

On gnats in the sun.

WHAT a cloud of gnats is here! Mark their motion: they do nothing, but play up and down in the warm sun, and sing; and, when they have done, sit down, and sting the next hand or face, they can seize upon.

See here a perfect emblem of idleness and detraction. How many do thus miserably misspend their good hours! who, after they have wasted the succeeding days in vain and merely unprofitable pastime, sit down, and backbite their neighbours!

The bee sings too sometimes; but she works also; and her work is not more admirable than useful*: but these foolish flies do nothing but play and sing to no purpose. Even the busiest and most active spirits must recreate; but to make a trade of sport, is for none but lazy wantons.

The bee stings too; but it is when she is provoked: these draw blood, unoffended; and sting, for their own pleasure. I would be glad of some recreation; but to enable and sweeten my work. I would not but sting sometimes, where is just cause

LII. *Visis culicibus in radiis solaribus ludentibus.*

QUANTA culicum nubes istìc est! Vide verò mihi horum motus omnes: ludunt illi nempe per solis radios, sùsque déque volitando, cantillantque; et, ubi desierint, sedent, et manum proximam faciemve, in quam incidere contigerit, mordent illico.

Ecce perfectum emblema otii ac detractionis. Quot sunt, qui ita pessimè horas bonas consumunt! qui, ubi succedentes sibi dies vanis inutilibusque ludorum generibus prodegerint, resident tandem æquè inertes, detrahuntque proximis.

Etiam cantat aliquando apis; sed et laborat quoque assiduè: istæ verò fatuæ musciculæ ludunt semper canuntque perperàm. Vel negotiosissima quæque et agillima ingenia necesse habent tantò magis recreari; totos verò se dedere ludis ac voluptatibus, otiosissimorum hominum èque Epicuri grege porcorum est.

Mordet stimulatque etiam apis; sed non nisi injuriâ quâpiam lacessita: isti sanguinem, parùm provocati, eliciunt; et tantùm animi causâ lædunt. Non recusârim ego exercitationis genus aliquod; quo me recreem fiamque labori meo et aptior et ala-

* The sentence "And her work is not more admirable than useful," seems to have been overlooked by the Translator. EDITOR.

of offence. But God bless me from those men, which will ever be either doing nothing, or ill.

crior. Neque non stimulare velim aliquando, ubi sontica me injuria irritaverit. Libera verò me, ô Deus, ab illis hominibus, qui aut nihil, aut malè semper agere mavolunt.

On the sight of grapes.

LIII. *Conspectis uvarum racemis.*

MARK the difference of these grapes. There you see a cluster, whose grapes touch one another, well ripened: here you see some stragglers, which grow almost solitarily, green and hard.

It is thus with us. Christian society helpeth our progress: and *Woe to him that is alone.* He is well, that is the better for others; but he is happy, by whom others are better.

VIDE quantum inter uvas hasce discrimen est. Ibi botrum cernis uvarum, quæ se mutuò contingunt, benè maturum: solitariæ, quas alibi vides, virides planè duræque manent.

Sic et nobiscum se habet. Sancta societas progressum nostrum haud parùm promovet: *Væ autum soli.* Benè illi est, qui aliorum operâ fit melior; sed fœlix est is, cujus operâ fiunt alii meliores.

On a corn field over-grown with weeds.

LIV. *Viso agro herbis noxiis malè infestato.*

HERE were a goodly field of corn, if it were not over-laid with weeds. I do not like these reds, and blues, and yellows, amongst these plain stalks and ears. This beauty would do well elsewhere. I would rather to see a plot less fair, and more yielding.

In this field, I see a true picture of the world: wherein, there is more glory, than true substance; wherein, the greater part carries it from the better; wherein, the native sons of the earth out-strip the adventitious breed of grace; wherein, parasites and unprofitable hang-byes do both rob and over-top their masters. Both field and world grow alike, look alike, and shall end alike; both are for the fire: while the

Quàm lætâ gauderet segete agellus iste, nisi quòd herbis hisce noxiis ita nimiùm abundet. Non amo colores hosce cæruleos, rubeos, flavos, simplicibus aristis interspersos. Venustas hæc alibi mihi placeret magis. Malo istîc videre arvum minùs pulchrum, ferax magis.

In agro hoc, vivam mundi effigiem video: in quo, plus gloriæ, quàm solidæ virtutis inesse comperitur; ubi, major pars exuperat meliorem; ubi, nativa terræ proles adventitiam gratiæ sobolem longè vincit; ubi, parasiti et inutiles scurræ dominos suos et spoliant et aliquando etiam superemineant. Et ager et mundus, uti similes apparent, ita similiter crescunt, desinuntque similiter; igni meritò adjudicatur uterque:

homely and solid ears of despised virtue shall be for the garners of immortality.

dum simplices solidæque contemptæ virtutis aristæ in horreis immortalitatis reponuntur.

On the sight of tulips, and marigolds, &c. in his garden. LV. *Conspectâ tulipâ, calendulâ, heliotropio in horto suo.*

THESE flowers are true clients of the sun: how observant they are of his motion and influence! At even, they shut up; as mourning for his departure, without whom they neither can nor would flourish: in the morning, they welcome his rising, with a cheerful openness: and at noon, are fully displayed, in a free acknowledgment of his bounty.

Thus doth the good heart unto God. *When thou turnedst away thy face, I was troubled;* saith the man after God's own heart. *In thy presence is life; yea, the fulness of joy.* Thus doth the carnal heart to the world: when that withdraws his favour, he is dejected; and revives, with a smile. All is in our choice. Whatsoever is our sun will thus carry us.

O God, be thou to me, such as thou art in thyself: thou shalt be merciful, in drawing me; I shall be happy, in following thee.

VERI clientes solis sunt isti flores: quàm studiosè observant et motum illius et influxum! Sub vesperam, claudunturstatim; quasi lugentes discessum illius, sine quo neque possint neque velint quidem efflorescere: manè verò, reditui ipsius, alacri quâdam foliorum extensione, gratulantur: meridie autem, velut liberrimè ejus bonitatem fassi, quàm maximè dilatantur.

Cor pium sic planè facit Deo. *Avertisti faciem tuam, et turbabar;* inquit ille qui Deo cordi erat. E contrà; *In præsentiâ tui vita est; imò, plenitudo gaudii.* Sed et cor carneum sic facit seculo: illo quippe favorem subtrahente, dejicitur; renidente demùm, reviviscit. Plurimùm ergo interest, in quo nostra se figit electio. Sol noster, quicquid id est, nos ad se attrahet.

O Deus, sis tu mihi, quod in te ipso es: scilicet eris tu, me trahendo, misericors; ego, te sequendo, fœlix ero.

On the sound of a cracked bell. LVI. *Audito campanæ fractæ sono.*

WHAT a harsh sound doth this bell make, in every ear! The metal is good enough: it is the rift, that makes it so unpleasingly jarring.

How too like is this bell, to a scandalous and ill-lived teacher! His calling is honourable: his noise is heard far enough: but the flaw, which is noted in his life, mars his doctrine; and of-

Quàm ingratum horridumque sonitum edit campana hæc, cuivis auri! Metallum satis purum est: sola fissura est, quæ raucum hoc et discors sonat.

Quàm similis est campanula hæc, infami et improbo doctori! Munus illius reverendum est: satis sonora vox ei: scandalum, quod ab impurâ ejus vitâ oritur, doctrinæ fructum omnem destruit

fends those ears, which, else, would take pleasure in his teaching. It is possible, that such a one, even by that discordous noise, may ring in others into the triumphant Church of heaven: but there is no remedy for himself, but the fire; whether for his reforming, or judgment.

et corrumpit; offenditque aures illas, quæ, absque hoc foret, concionibus ipsius caperentur. Fieri fortè potest, ut hic talis, vel dissono illo stridore, ad triumphantem in cœlis Ecclesiam vocet colligatque alios: nullum verò ipsi remedium manet, præter igneum; sive reformando homini, sive destruendo.

On the sight of a blind man. LVII. *Viso cæco quodam.*

How much am I bound to God, that hath given me eyes, to see this man's want of eyes! With what suspicion and fear he walks! How doth his hand and staff examine his way? With what jealousy, doth he receive every morsel, every draught; and yet meets with many a post, and stumbles at many a stone, and swallows many a fly! To him the world is, as if it were not; or, as if it were all rubs, and snares, and downfalls: and if any man will lend him a hand, he must trust to his, however faithless, guide; without all comfort, save this, that he cannot see himself miscarry.

Many a one is thus spiritually blind; and, because he is so, discerns it not; and, not discerning, complains not of so woeful a condition. *The god of this world hath blinded the eyes of the children of disobedience.* They walk on, in the ways of death; and yield themselves over to the guidance of him, who seeks for nothing, but their precipitation into hell *. It is an addition to the misery of this inward occæcation, that it

Quantum debeo ego Deo meo, qui mihi oculos dederit, quibus hunc hominem et oculis carere videam et carendo miserum! Quàm suspitiosè, quàm meticulosè incedit ille! Quàm solicitè, et manu et baculo, examinat sibi viam! Quàm anxiè timidèque, morsiunculam omnem haustúsque guttulam recipit; sæpè tamen aut posti alicui eundo obviat, aut ad lapidem impingit, aut muscam bibendo absorbet! Non aliter se huic habet mundus, quàm si omnino non esset; aut, ac si totus esset offendicula, retia, præcipitia: quòd si quis illi manum commodare velit, huic, quantumvis perfido, duci credat necesse est; absque omni quidem miseriæ allevamento, excepto uno hoc, quòd perire se nequeat videre.

Plærique sic spiritualitèr cæci sunt: et, quia sic se habent, parùm discernunt; non discernentes autem, de tam miserâ conditione nulli conqueruntur. *Deus hujus sæculi excæcavit oculos infidelibus et immorigeris.* Ambulant illi, in viis æternæ mortis; atque ei se ducendos committunt, qui nihil aliud, præter ipsorum in infernum præcipitationem, quærit.

* The remainder is omitted in the Latin. Editor.

is ever joined with a secure confidence in them, whose trade and ambition is to betray their souls.

Whatever become of these outward senses, which are common to me with the meanest and most despicable creatures, O Lord, give me not over to that spiritual darkness, which is incident to none but those, that live without thee; and must perish eternally, because they want thee.

On a beech-tree full of nuts.

LVIII. *Ad conspectum fagi feracissimæ.*

How is this tree overladen with mast, this year! It was not so, the last; neither will it, I warrant you, be so, the next. It is the nature of these free trees, so to pour out themselves into fruit at once, that they seem after either sterile or niggardly.

So have I seen pregnant wits, not discreetly governed, overspend themselves in some one master-piece so lavishly, that they have proved either barren, or poor and flat, in all other subjects. True wisdom, as it serves to gather due sap, both for nourishment and fructification; so it guides the seasonable and moderate bestowing of it in such manner, as that one season may not be a glutton, while others famish. I would be glad to attain to that measure and temper, that, upon all occasions, I might always have enough; never, too much.

Quàm frugifera, hoc anno, est ista arbor! Non ita, superiore, onusta fuit; neque sic erit, sine dubio, proximè futuro. Ille mos harum arborum prodigarum est, ita se totas in fructum unà effundere, ut steriles postmodò et avaræ videantur.

Ita vidi ego prægnantia quædam ingenia, quibus justa prudensque sibi moderandi cura defuit, sic se tota in elaborato aliquo opere prodigere, ut aut parùm deinceps feracia, aut in aliis omnibus egena et elanguida, visa fuerint. Vera sapientia, uti succo attrahendo, cùm nutrimenti tum fœcunditatis causâ, inservit; ita regit ejusdem tempestivam moderatamque dispensationem, ut satura nimis non sit tempestas hæc, dum illa famelica est. Id mihi curæ erit eam assequi mensuram temperiemque, ut, quicquid tandem evenerit, sat mihi semper suppetat; nunquam verò, nimium.

On the sight of a piece of money under the water.

LIX. *Ad conspectum numini in aquam injecti.*

I should not wish ill to a covetous man, if I should wish all his coin in the bottom of the river. No pavement could so well be-

Non malè forsan avaro optarem, si quicquid illi nummorum est profundo flumini devoverem. Nec quod pavimentum gurgiti il-

come that stream: no sight could better fit his greedy desires: for there, every piece would seem double; every teston would appear a shilling; every crown, an angel. It is the nature of that element, to greaten appearing quantities: while we look through the air upon that solid body, it can make no other representations.

Neither is it otherwise in spiritual eyes and objects. If we look with carnal eyes through the interposed mean of sensuality, every base and worthless pleasure will seem a large contentment: if with weak eyes we shall look at small and immaterial truths aloof off, (in another element of apprehension,) every parcel thereof shall seem main and essential: hence, every knack of heraldry in the sacred genealogies, and every scholastical quirk in disquisitions of Divinity, are made matters of no less than life and death to the soul. It is a great improvement of true wisdom, to be able to see things, as they are; and, to value them, as they are seen. Let me labour, for that power and stayedness of judgment, that neither my senses may deceive my mind, nor the object may delude my sense.

li aptius: nec quod fortè spectaculum inexplebili illius desiderio accommodatius: foret singuli enim ibi nummi duplices viderentur; drachmæ nimirum omnes, totidem solidi; scutorum verò lilia, totidem angeli apparerent. Elemento nempe huic innatum hoc est, augere, quoad externam speciem, quantitatem quamlibet: dum, mediante tenuiore hoc aëre, solidum illud corpus perspiciendo penetramus, non potest quicquam nobis aliud representari.

Neque se habet aliter in spiritualibus sive oculis sive objectis. Si carneis oculis per interpositum concupiscentiæ medium prospicimus, vilis quæque et frivola voluptas largam quandam perfectamque animi contentationem mentietur: si debilibus oculis minutulos penèque ἀδιάφορας veritatum apices à longè contueamur, (præsertim verò ubi apprehensionis nostræ medium variatur,) unaquæque particula et maxima videbitur et rei religionis haud parùm necessaria: hinc fit, inutiles quasque sacrarum genealogiarum minutias, scholasticasque omnes in Theologicis disquisitionibus subtilitates, inter summa fidei capita annumerari. Veræ prudentiæ magna laus est, posse videre res, ut sunt; et, ut sic videntur, appreciari. Operam ego sedulò dederim, illam assequi judicii vim firmitudinemque, ut neque sensus mei animum decipiant, neque objecta sensum fallant.

On the first rumour of the earthquake at Lime; wherein a wood was swallowed up, with the fall of two hills.

LX. *Accepto rumore terræmotûs Limensis; à quo sylva quædam, casis duorum montium, absorpta quasique sepulta fuit.*

GOOD Lord! how do we know, when we are sure? If there were

BONE Deus! unde nosse possumus, quando ac ubi in tuto si-

man or beast in that wood, they seemed as safe, as we now are. They had nothing, but heaven above them; nothing, but firm earth below them: and yet, in what a dreadful pitfall were they instantly taken! There is no fence for God's hand. A man would as soon have feared, that heaven would fall upon him, as those hills. It is no pleasing ourselves with the unlikelihood of divine judgments. We have oft heard of hills covered with woods; but of woods covered with hills, I think never till now. Those, that planted or sowed those woods, intended they should be spent with fire: but, lo, God meant they should be devoured with earth. We are wont to describe impossibilities by the meeting of mountains; and, behold, here two mountains are met, to swallow up a valley. What a good God it is, whose Providence overrules and disposes of all these events! Towns or cities might as well have been thus buried, as a solitary dale, or a shrubby wood. Certainly, the God, that did this, would have the use of it reach further than the noise. This he did, to shew us what he could, what he might do. If our hearts do not quake and rend at the acknowledgment of his Infinite Power, and fear of his terrible judgments, as well as that earth did, we must expect to be made warnings, that would take none.

mus? In sylvâ hâc seu bestiæ seu homines siqui erant, quàm se non minùs securos putabant, quàm nos nunc istìc sumus? Supra se nil, nisi cœlum; infra se nil, nisi terram firmissimam, videre potuerunt: et tamen, quàm horrendâ subitò decipulâ deprehensi periêre! Divinæ manûs effugium nullum uspiam est. Æquè suspicatus fuisset quis, cœlum ruiturum, ac illos montes. Non est quòd nobis placeamus improbabili judiciorum divinorum eventu. Sæpe quidem audivimus vidimusque montes sylvis coopertos; sylvas verò montibus coopertas, nusquam antehac accepimus. Qui sylvas illas plantârunt severuntve, igne aliquando absumendas fore arbitrabantur: ecce, Deus terrâ absorbendas judicavit. Impossibilia quæque solemus occursu montium describere; et, ecce, istìc montes duo convenerunt, vallem deglutiendo. Quàm beneficus Deus est, cujus Providentia casus istos omnes regit disponitque! Oppida urbesve aquè facilè sic sepeliri potuissent, atque vallis solitaria, ac fruticosa sylva. Certè quidem, ille, qui hoc fecit, Deus, eventus hujus usum longiùs quàm sonitum dilatari voluit. Fecit hoc, ut doceret quid et ille posset, et nos meriti. Si corda nostra sensu quodam reverendo Infinitæ ejus Potentiæ, terribiliumque judiciorum metu, non minùs tremant discindanturque quàm terra hæc, quid mirum exempla nos fieri aliis, qui aliorum exemplis moveri usque detrectavimus?

On the sight of a dormouse. LXI. *Ad conspectum gliris.*

AT how easy a rate do these creatures live, that are fed with rest!

Quàm minimo sumptu vivunt hæc animalcula, quæ solo somno

So the bear and the hedgehog, they say, spend their whole winter in sleep; and rise up fatter, than they lay down.

How oft have I envied the thriving drowsiness of these beasts, when the toil of thoughts hath bereaved me of but one hour's sleep, and left me languishing to a new task! And yet, when I have well digested the comparison of both these conditions, I must needs say, I would rather waste with work, than batten with ease: and would rather choose a life profitably painful, than uselessly dull and delicate. I cannot tell, whether I should say those creatures live, which do nothing; since we are wont ever to notify life by motion: sure I am, their life is not vital. For me, let me rather complain of a mind, that will not let me be idle; than of a body, that will not let me work.

pascuntur! Ita et ursos et erinaceos aiunt hyemem totam deterere; ac surgere pinguiores, quàm decubuerant.

Quoties invidi ego saginatrici harum bestiarum somnolentiæ, ubi cogitationum labor assiduus somnum mihi omnem ademerit, neque per horulæ unius momentum quiescere permiserit, languescentemque novo deinde penso addixerit! Attamen, ubi hanc utriusque conditionem probè appenderim, fatebor equidem lubens, malo labore deteri, quàm pinguescere otio: malo vitam utiliter operosam, quàm inutiliter segnem delicatamque. Nescio, an verè possim dicere animalia illa vel vivere quidem, quæ nihil agunt; quandoquidem nos vitam motu definire soleamus: certè, illorum vita parùm vitalis est. Quod ad me, malim ego profectò conqueri de animo, quiescere nescio; quàm de corpore, laboris impatiente.

On bees fighting.

LXII. *Visis apibus secum pugnantibus.*

What a pity it is, to see these profitable, industrious creatures fall so furiously upon each other; and thus sting and kill each other, in the very mouth of the hive! I could like well, to see the bees do this execution upon wasps and drones, enemies to their common stock: this savours but of justice: but to see them fall foul upon those of their own wing, it cannot but trouble their owner; who must needs be an equal loser, by the victory of either.

There is no more perfect resemblance of a Commonweath, whether civil or sacred, than in a hive. The bees are painful

Quàm mihi dolet, videre utiles hasce et industrias creaturas in se mutuò tàm furiosè involantes; seque, vel in ipso præsepiorum ingressu, stimulantes invicem interficientesque! Id mihi cordi foret, aspicere apes hasce idem fucis facere ac vespis, communis utilitatis hostibus notissimis: justitiam hoc sapit ilicet: videre verò apes has secummet ipsis dimicantes, non potest non esse molestum domino suo; qui, quæcunque demum vicerint, cives perdat necesse est.

Perfectior nulla potest esse Reipublicæ, sive civilis sive sacræ, imago, quàm in istis apum præsepibus. Apes operosi sunt

and honest compatriots; labouring to bring wax and honey to the maintenance of the public state: the wasps and drones are unprofitable and harmful hangbyes, which live upon the spoil of others' labours; whether as common barretors, or strong thieves, or bold parasites, they do nothing but rob their neighbours. It is a happy sight, when these feel the dint of justice, and are cut off from doing further mischief: but to see well-affected and beneficial subjects undo themselves with duels, whether of law or sword; to see good Christians, of the same profession, shedding each others' blood upon quarrels of religion, is no other than a sad and hateful spectacle; and so much the more, by how much we have more means of reason and grace, to compose our differences, and correct our offensive contentiousness.

O God, who art at once the Lord of Hosts and Prince of Peace, give us war with spiritual wickedness, and peace with our brethren.

honestique concives; sedulò collaborantes ceræ ac melli ad communis rei sustentationem importandis: vespæ ac fuci inutiles sunt et improbuli scurræ, qui alienorum laborum spoliis victitare solent; sive ut vitilitigatores, sive fures, sive edaces parasiti, proximos quosque despoliantur. Ubi justitiæ aciem sentiunt isti, tempestivasque pœnas sic luunt ut nihil deinceps mali perpetrent, fœlix profectò spectaculum est: videre autem benè-affectos fidosque subditos duellis, sive forensibus sive mavortiis, decertantes; videre Christianos, fidei ejusdem professores, mutuum sibi sanguinem religionis causâ crudeliter profundentes, triste et horrendum quiddam est et prodigii plenissimum; eoque magis, quo plura ac commodiora et rationis et gratiæ media nobis, cùm componendis litibus, tum corrigendis vitiosis contentionum studiis, suppetunt.

O Deus, qui unà et Dominus Exercituum et Princeps Pacis audis, bellum cum vitiis, cum fratribus pacem, indulge.

On wasps falling into a glass.

See you that narrow-mouthed glass, which is set near to the hive? mark how busily the wasps resort to it; being drawn thither by the smell of that sweet liquor, wherewith it is baited: see how eagerly they creep into the mouth of it *; and fall down suddenly from that slippery steepness, into that watery trap, from which they can never rise: there, after

LXIII. *Conspectis vespis in vitrum melle illitum decidentibus.*

Vide modò vitream illam ore angusto phialam, quàm proximè præsepio illi collocatam: quàm studiosè convolant illò vespæ; dulcis illius, quo inescatur, liquoris odore attractæ; deciduntque illico à lubrico hoc præcipitio, in decipulam illam aqueam, nunquam deinceps evasuræ: ibique, post paulum vani laboris ac lassitudinis, suffocantur statim et

* "See how eagerly they creep into the mouth of it," omitted in the Latin. Editor.

some vain labour and weariness, they drown and die. You do not see any of the bees look that way: they pass directly to their hive, without any notice taken of such a pleasing bait.

Idle and ill-disposed persons are drawn away with every temptation: they have both leisure and will, to entertain every sweet allurement to sin; and wantonly prosecute their own wicked lusts, till they fall into irrecoverable damnation. Whereas the diligent and laborious Christian, that follows hard and conscionably the works of an honest calling, is free from the danger of these deadly enticements; and lays up honey of comfort, against the winter of evil. Happy is that man, who can see and enjoy the success of his labour: but however, this we are sure of; if our labour cannot purchase the good we would have, it shall prevent the evil we would avoid.

intereunt. Nullam vides apicularum illò respectantem: illæ rectà ad suum præsepe volant, suavem illam escam ne notantes quidem.

Otiosæ malèque feriatæ animæ omnibus tentationibus facilè distrahuntur: et otii illis sat est et arbitrii, omnes peccatorum illecebras lubenter excipere; suasque vitiosas libidines prosequi petulantiùs, donec in perniciem omnino irrecuperabilem inciderint. Ubi diligens laboriosusque Christianus, qui honestæ vocationis operibus jugiter sanctèque incumbit, ab omni lethalium illiciorum periculo immunis est; ac mel veri solaminis, in duram mali hyemem prudens reponit. Fœlix is est, cui non videre modò liceat laboris sui successum sed et illo frui: quicquid tamen contigerit, hoc certò sanè constat; si labor noster non possit bonum quod volumus adipisci, malum certè quod vitare cupimus prævortet.

On a spring in the wild forest.

LXIV. *Viso fonticulo è loco quodam deserto ebulliente.*

Lo here the true pattern of bounty. What clear crystal streams are here; and how liberally do they gush forth, and hasten down with a pleasing murmur into the valley! Yet you see neither man, nor beast, that takes part of that wholesome and pure water. It is enough, that those may dip, who will: the * refusal of others doth no whit abate of this proffered plenty.

Thus bountiful house-keepers hold on their set ordinary provi-

Ecce veram imaginem beneficentiæ. Quàm claræ purèque chrystallinæ sunt hæ undæ; quàmque largiter effluunt, et suavi quodam murmure in vallem festinant! Hominem tamen nullum interea vides, imò ne brutum quidem, quod puræ illius salubrimæque lymphæ particeps esse possit. Satis est, obvio cuique patere laticem hunc, ita ut haurire possit, qui volet, liberè.

Sic munifici patres-familias quotidianum semper dimensum

* This sentence is omitted in the Latin. EDITOR.

sion, whether they have guests or no. Thus conscionable preachers pour out the living waters of wholesome doctrine, whether their hearers partake of those blessed means of salvation, or neglect their holy endeavours. Let it be our comfort, that we have been no niggards of these celestial streams: let the world give an account of the improvement.

apparant, adsint absintve hospites. Sic concionatores pii vivas salutaris doctrinæ aquas ubertim profundunt, sive auditores sacrosancta salutis media participare malint, sive tantos conatus negligant. Ilicet hoc nobis solatio sit, non fuisse harum cœlestium aquarum deparcos: harum verò beneficii ac usûs rationem reddat mundus.

On the sight of an owl in the twi-light. LXV. *Conspecto bubone.*

WHAT a strange melancholic life doth this creature lead! to hide her head, all the day long, in an ivy-bush; and at night, when all other birds are at rest, to fly abroad and vent her harsh notes!

I know not why the ancients have sacred this bird to wisdom, except it be for her safe closeness and singular perspicacity; that, when other domestical and airy creatures are blind, she only hath inward light, to discern the least objects for her own advantage. Surely, thus much wit they have taught us in her: That he is the wisest man, that would have the least to do with the multitude: That no life is so safe, as the obscure: That retiredness, if it have less comfort, yet less danger and vexation: lastly, That he is truly wise, who sees by a light of his own; when the rest of the world sit in an ignorant and confused darkness; unable to apprehend any truth, save by the helps of an outward illumination.

Quàm miserè tristem ac melancholicam vitam agit iste ales! qui, totà die, hederæ densioris tegmine caput suum occulit; de nocte verò, cùm quiescunt volucres reliquæ, evolat stridulasque et ingratas voces edit.

Nescio equidem quorsum prudentiæ hunc alitem olim sacrârint veteres, nisi ob tutam forsan obscuritatem perspicacitatemque singularem; quòd, cùm animalium reliqua, domestica et aërea, prorsùs cæcutiant, bubo solus, interno quodam fretûs lumine, vel minima quæque in rem suam objecta conspicetur. Istoc, nempe, sapientiæ illi nos hujus exemplo docuerunt: Prudentissimum esse eum, cui minimum est cum vulgo negotii: Nullam adeo tutam esse vitam, ac quæ obscurè traducitur: Secessionem, etsi minus fortè solatii, minus tamen periculi vexationisque nobis præstare: denique, Illum verè sapere, qui suo cernit lumine; cùm mundus reliquus in confusis quibusdam inscitiæ tenebris usque resideat; nec, nisi externæ illuminationis adminiculo, veritatis quicquam discernere unquam possit.

Had this fowl come forth in the day-time, how had all the little birds flocked wondering about her; to see her uncouth visage, to hear her untuned notes! She likes her estate never the worse; but pleaseth herself in her own quiet reservedness.

Si de die prodiisset hic ales, quàm istuc illico collectæ aviculæ omnes admirabundæ illum cinxissent; quasi vultus deformitatem, vocisque asperitatem unanimes haud parùm stuperent! Nihilo sibi tamen minùs perplacet illi sua conditio; neque minùs is sibi quietam delitescentiam gratulatur.

It is not for a wise man, to be much affected with the censures of the rude and unskilful vulgar; but to hold fast unto his own well-chosen and well-fixed resolutions. Every fool knows, what is wont to be done; but what is best to be done, is known only to the wise.

Non est quòd vir prudens, imperiti rudisque vulgi censuris nimiùm afficiatur; potiùs vero suis ipsius benè fundatis firmatisque determinationibus usque adhærescat. Quid fieri soleat, nemo non fatuus novit; quid debeat fieri, soli sapienti innotescit.

LXVI.

On an arm benumbed. *De brachio obstupescente.*

How benumbed, and, for the time, senseless, is this arm of mine become, only with too long leaning upon it! While I used it to other services, it failed me not: now that I have rested upon it, I find cause to complain.

It is no trusting to an arm of flesh: on whatsoever occasion we put our confidence therein, this reliance will be sure to end in pain and disappointment.

O God, thine arm is strong and mighty: all thy creatures rest themselves upon that, and are comfortably sustained. Oh, that we were not more capable of distrust, than thine omnipotent hand is of weariness and subduction.

Quàm obstupet mihi, pro tempore, brachium, quo innixus sum diutulè, ferèque insensibile fit! Aliis certè à me destinatum officiis, nunquam mihi defuit: nunc verò ubi me illi reposuerim, causam querendi justam sentio.

Non est quòd brachio cuiquam carneo fidamus: quicquid fuerit in quo nos illi recumbendum censebimus, comperiemus tandem fiduciam hanc dolore speique frustratione desituram.

O Deus, forte ac potens est brachium tuum: in illud reclinant creaturæ tuæ omnes, tutòque ac fœliciter usque sustentantur. O, si nos parùm capaciores essemus diffidentiæ, quàm manus tua omnipotens defatigationis subductionisque.

LXVII.

On the sparks flying upward. *Vîsá scintillâ sursum volante.*

It is a feeling comparison, that of Job, of man born to labour, as the sparks to fly upward. That motion of theirs is no other than

Viva illa est, quæ apud Jobum occurrit similitudo, hominis ad laborem nati, scintillæque ad sursum evolandum. Naturalis nem-

natural. Neither is it otherwise for man to labour: his mind is created active, and apt to some or other ratiocination; his joints all stirring; his nerves made for helps of moving; and his occasions of living call him forth to action. So as an idle man doth not more want grace, than degenerate from nature. Indeed, at the first kindling of the fire, some sparks are wont, by the impulsion of the bellows, to fly forward or sideward: and even so in our first age, youthly vanity may move us to irregular courses; but, when those first violences are overcome, and we have attained to a settledness of disposition, our sparks fly up, our life is labour. And why should we not do that, which we are made for? Why should not God rather grudge us our being, than we grudge him our work? It is no thank to us, that we labour out of necessity.

pe est ille scintillarum motus. Identidem et homini labor: mens illi creatur activa, et ratiocinationi alicui apta; membra omnia motui cuidam accommodata; nervi, motûs adminicula, concessi; sed et omnes vitæ suæ rationes illum ad actionem aliquam evocant et solicitant. Ita ut osiosus homo non magis gratiâ destituatur, quàm ab ipsâ naturâ degenerat. Certè quidem, in primâ ignis accensione, scintillæ forsan aliquæ, flabellorum impulsu, hàc illàc, sùsque déque, volitare solent: sic etiam in primordiis fortè ætatis nostræ rudique adolescentiâ, juvenilis quædam vanitas nos ad motus inordinatos irregularesque incitaverit; sed, ubi deferbuerint illæ ardentiores adolescentiæ flammæ, et nos quandam dispositionis stabilitatem fuerimus assecuti, jam sursum volant scintillæ nostræ, vitaque nostra totus labor est. Et quare non id nos facimus, cui creatione destinamur? Cur non detrectaverit nobis potiùs vitam Deus, quàm nos Deo opus? Nostris profectò ingratiis laboramus, si necessitate impulsi id facimus.

Out of my obedience to thee, O God, I desire ever to be employed. I shall never have comfort in my toil, if it be rather a purveyance for myself, than a sacrifice to thee.

Obedientiâ tui, O Deus, permotus, aliquid semper agere velim. Nec me quicquam solabitur unquam labor meus, si mihi ipsi potiùs, provisioni inservierit, quàm tibi, sacrificio.

LXVIII.

On the sight of a raven. *Corvo conspecto.*

I CANNOT see that bird, but I must needs think of Elijah; and wonder no less, at the miracle of his faith, than of his provision. It was a strong belief, that carried him into a desolate retiredness, to expect food from ravens. This fowl, we know, is ravenous: all is too little, that he can

NON possum ego unquam alitem hunc adspicere, quin statim Eliam cogitem; miraculumque, non minùs fidei ipsius, quàm alimoniæ stupeam. Fortis illa quidem stabilisque fiducia fuit, quæ ipsum in remotam divexit solitudinem, ut à corvis alimentum expectaret. Rapax est, ut nos probè

forage for himself: and the prophet's reason must needs suggest to him, that in a dry barren desert bread and flesh must be great dainties: yet he goes aside, to expect victuals from that purveyance. He knew this fowl to be no less greedy, than unclean: unclean, as in law, so in the nature of his feed; what is his ordinary prey, but loathsome carrion? yet, since God had appointed him this caterer, he stands not upon the nice points of a fastidious squeamishness; but confidently depends upon that uncouth provision: and, accordingly, those unlikely purveyors bring him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening. Not one of those hungry ravens could swallow one morsel of those viands, which were sent by them to a better mouth. The river of Cherith sooner failed him, than the tender of their service. No doubt, Elijah's stomach was often up before that his incurious diet came: when, expecting from the mouth of his cave, out of what coast of heaven these his servitors might be descried; upon the sight of them, he magnified, with a thankful heart, the wonderful goodness and truth of his God; and was nourished more with his faith, than with his food.

O God, how infinite is thy providence, wisdom, power! We, creatures, are not what we are, but what thou wilt have us: when thy turn is to be served, we have none of our own. Give me but faith, and do what thou wilt.

novimus, iste ales: vix sibi sufficit, quod alicunde poterit deprædari: sed et ipsa ratio non potuerat non prophetæ suggerere, quantæ in arido quodam remotoque deserto deliciæ forent panis ac carnes: secedit tamen ille, etiam ab hoc œconomo cibum præstolaturus. Noverat is volucrem hanc non magis voracem, quàm immundam: immundam quidem, uti legi, ita etiam pastûs sui ratione; nam, quo tandem nisi fœtidissimis vescitur cadaveribus? cùm tamen Deus hunc illi obsonatorem ordinaverit, non fastidiosè nauseat quidem; sed mirâ animi confidentiâ insolitam illam cibi apparationem expectat: proque fiduciâ suâ, illi parùm idonei obsonatores panem et carnem mane, vespere panem et carnem constantissimè apportant. Nec quis famelicorum horum corvorum vel unum ciborum illorum frustulum, qui meliori destinati sunt palato, deglutire potuit. Citiùs defecit Cherith fluvius, quàm officiosum istorum obsequium. Eliæ, proculdubiò, appetitus sæpiusculè incuriosam hanc dietam antevorterat: ubi ille, è speluncæ suæ limine, avidis curiosisque oculis observaverat, è quâ tandem cœli plagâ prodigiosi isti ministri devolarent; advenientesque à longè conspicatus, grato animo, miram Dei sui bonitatem veritatemque recoluerat; plusque suâ fide, quàm cibo nutriebatur.

O Deus, quàm infinita est providentia, sapientia, potentia tua! Nos, misellæ creaturæ tuæ, non id sumus quod existimus, sed quod tu nos existere voluisti: ubi tua res agitur, nihil nobis de nostro suppetit. Indulge mihi fidem, et fac quod voles.

On a worm. LXIX. *Viso verme.*

It was a homely expression, which God makes of the state of his Church; *Fear not, thou worm Jacob.* Every foot is ready to tread on this despised creature. While it kept itself in that cold obscure cell of the earth, wherein it was hidden; it lay safe, because it was secret: but now, that it hath put itself forth of that close cave, and hath presented itself to the light of the sun, to the eye of passengers; how is it vexed with the scorching beams; and wrings up and down, in a helpless perplexity, not finding where to shroud itself! how obnoxious is it, to the fowls of the air, to the feet of men and beasts!

He, that made this creature such, and calls his Church so, well knew the answerableness of their condition. How doth the world overlook and contemn that little flock, whose best guard hath ever been secrecy! And, if ever that despicable number have dared to shew itself, how hath it been scorched, and trampled upon, and entertained with all variety of persecution!

O Saviour, thy Spouse fares no otherwise, than thyself. To match her fully, thou hast said of thyself, *I am a worm, and no man.* Such thou wert in thine humbled estate here on earth: such thou wouldest be. But, as it is a true word, that he, who made the angels in heaven, made also the worms on earth: so it is no less true, that he, who made himself and his Church worms upon earth, hath raised our nature in his person above the an-

Quàm humili loquendi modo, exprimit Deus Ecclesiæ suæ conditionem; *Ne metue, ó vermis Jacob.* Nullus non pes est, quin despicatissimam illam creaturam calcare soleat. Dum intra frigidas obscurasque terræ cellulas, in quibus delituerat, sese contineret; tutò, quia secretè, habitaverat: nunc verò, cùm ex abditis illis cavernulis se exeruerit semel, luminique solari sese audacter præsentaverit, oculisque simul transeuntium: quàm radiis hisce fervidioribus torretur illico; hàc ac illàc se torquet, miserè cruciata, quò se subducat nescia! quàm palam, et volucribus cœli, et hominum bestiarumque pedibus obnoxia!

Qui tale fecit animalculum hoc, sicque appellare voluit Ecclesiam suam, benè nôrat conditionis utriusque analogiam. Quàm despicit contemnitque mundus pusillum illum gregem, cujus tutamen maximum fuit semper obscuritas! Sicubi verò unquam contemptissima hæc bonorum paucitas mundo se exhibere ausa fuerit, quàm statim tosta, quàm calcata, quàm omni persecutionum genere accepta fuit!

O Servator, non aliter quidem Sponsæ tuæ, quàm ipsi tibi factum sentio. Par ut illi fores, tu de te dixisti ipse, *Vermis sum, non homo.* Talis in illâ terrenæ humiliationis conditione fuisti: talis esse voluisti. Sed, uti verum verbum illud est, qui fecit in cœlo angelos, etiam in terrâ fecisse vermiculos: ita non minùs etiam verum est, qui se et Ecclesiam suam vermes fecit super terram, naturam utique nostram sibi adsumptam super omnes angelos

gels; and our person, in his Church, to little less than angels. It matters not, how we fare in this valley of tears, while we are sure of that infinite amends of glory above.

elevâsse; personamque nostram, Ecclesiæ suæ membra, paulò minùs angelis honorâsse. Parùm refert, quid nobis fiat in hâc valle lachrymarum, dum certi simus pauxillum hoc miseriæ æterno cœlestis gloriæ pondere compensandum.

On the putting on of his clothes. LXX. *Se induendo.*

WHAT a poor thing were man, if he were not beholden to other creatures! The earth affords him flax, for his linen; bread, for his belly: the beasts, his ordinary clothes; the silk-worm, his bravery: the back and bowels of the earth, his metals and fuel; the fishes, fowls, beasts, his nourishment. His wit indeed works upon all these, to improve them to his own advantage: but they must yield him materials, else he subsists not. And yet, we fools are proud of ourselves; yea, proud of the cast suits of the very basest creatures. There is not one of them, that have so much need of us. They would enjoy themselves, the more, if man were not.

O God, the more we are sensible of our own indigence, the more let us wonder at thine all-sufficiency in thyself; and long for that happy condition, wherein, thou, which art all perfection, shalt be all in all to us.

Quàm misella res homo foret, nisi id, quod ipsi benè est, aliis creaturis deberet! Terra, et linum, tergo suppeditat; et ventri, panem: communia vestimenta, bestiæ; superbiora, bombyces: viscera dorsumque terræ, metalla fomitemque; pisces, volucres, animalia reliqua, alimentum subministrant. Ingenium quidem illius novit, hæc omnia ad suum usum convertere: materiem verò nisi ipsa porrigerent, actum de homine esset. Et tamen, nos fatui admiratione nostri impotenter efferimur; imò, vilissimorum animalculorum exuviis superbimus. Nec quod horum est, æquè quod nostri indigeat. Imò potiùs fruerentur illa sese, eò magis, si homo non esset.

O Deus, quanto magis egestatem nostram persentiscimus, tanto magis αὐτάρκειον tuam admiremur; ambiamusque fœlicem illam conditionem, in quâ, tu, qui totus perfectio es, omnia in omnibus es nobis aliquando futurus.

On the sight of a great library. LXXI. *Conspectâ bibliothecâ instructissimâ.*

WHAT a world of wit is here packed up together! I know not, whether this sight doth more dismay, or comfort me: it dismays me, to think that here is so much, that I cannot know; it comforts

QUANTUS ingenii et eruditionis mundus istìc congeritur! Nescio certè, plusne mihi animi adimat, addatve spectaculum hoc: adimit quidem, quòd tam multa hìc sint, quæ ego scire nullus unquam po-

me, to think that this variety yields so good helps, to know what I should. There is no truer word than that of Solomon; *There is no end of making many books.* This sight verifies it. There is no end: indeed, it were pity there should. God hath given to man a busy soul; the agitation whereof cannot but, through time and experience, work out many hidden truths: to suppress these, would be no other than injurious to mankind, whose minds like unto so many candles should be kindled by each other. The thoughts of our deliberation are most accurate: these we vent into our papers. What a happiness is it, that, without all offence of necromancy, I may here call up any of the ancient Worthies of Learning, whether human or divine, and confer with them of all my doubts! that I can, at pleasure, summon whole synods of reverend Fathers and acute Doctors from all the coasts of the earth, to give their well-studied judgments, in all points of question, which I propose! Neither can I cast my eye casually upon any of these silent masters, but I must learn somewhat. It is a wantonness, to complain of choice. No law binds us to read all: but the more we can take in and digest, the better-liking must the mind needs be. Blessed be God, that hath set up so many clear lamps in his Church: now, none, but the wilfully blind, can plead darkness. And blessed be the memory of those his faithful servants, that have left their blood, their spirits, their lives, in these precious papers; and have willingly wasted themselves into these during monuments, to give light unto others.

tero; addit verò, quòd varietas hæc tanta tam accommoda mihi adminicula suppeditet, ea quæ debeo cognoscendi. Nihil verius est illo Solomonis; *Librorum conficiendorum finis nullus est.* Etiam spectaculum istoc luculento indicio est. Finis nullus est: imò, nec esse debet quidem. Operosam agilemque animam indulsit homini Deus; cujus assiduæ agitationes non possunt non multas, obstetricante interim tempore et experientiâ, abstrusas veritates in lucem producere: istas si quis supprimere ac suffocare vellet, næ ille humano generi, cujus mens mutuo lumine accendi usque solet, haud parùm injurius foret. E diuturnâ deliberatione et studîo ortæ cogitationes accuratissimæ omnium sint oportet: has scilicet chartis committimus. Quantæ fœlicitatis est, posse me heic, absque omni necromanticæ vitio, quemlibet priscorum Heroûm Doctrinæ, sive humanæ sive divinæ, statim evocare, cumque illis dubia mea omnia liberrimè communicare! posse, pro libito, totas reverendorum Patrum acutissimorumque Doctorum Synodos ab omnibus terræ plagis, suffragia sua mihi, de arduis quibusque subortis quæstionibus, non temera illa quidem sed maturè digesta laturas, convocare! Neque vel casu oculos conjicere possum in tacitorum istorum præceptorum quempiam, quin aliquid addiscam illico. De copiâ verò conqueri, delicati est nauseantisque animi. Nulla nos lex jubet omnes perlegere: quanto verò plures imbiberimus digesserimusque, tanto certè magis crescat pinguescatque animus necesse est. Benedictus sit Deus, qui tot claras lampades in Ecclesiâ suâ accenderit: nemo nunc,

nisi qui cæcutit volens, tenebras causari potest. Benedicta sit etiam fidelium ipsius servorum memoria, qui tantum sudoris, sanguinis, spirituumque, animarum denique, in pretiosissimis hisce chartis reliquerint; seque lubentes in duratura hæc monumenta profuderint, ut aliis præ-lucerent.

On the red cross on a door.

LXXII. *Visâ cruce rubeâ, pestis insigni, foribus appictâ.*

O SIGN fearfully significant! This sickness is a Cross indeed; and that a bloody one: both the form and colour import death. The Israelites' doors, whose lintels were besprinkled with blood, were passed over by the destroying angel: here, the destroying angel hath smitten; and hath left this mark of his deadly blow. We are wont to fight cheerfully under this ensign abroad, and be victorious: why should we tremble at it at home?

O God, there, thou fightest for us; here, against us. Under that, we have fought for thee; but under this, because our sins have fought against thee, we are fought against by thy judgments. Yet, Lord, it is thy cross, though a heavy one: it is ours, by merit; thine, by imposition. O Lord, sanctify thine affliction; and remove thy vengeance.

O SIGNUM planè dirum ac horrendum! Morbus iste vera Crux est; eaque profectò sanguinea: et forma et color ipse mortem præ se ferunt. Israelitarum fores, quarum superliminaria sanguine conspersa sunt, ab interfectore angelo tutæ ac immunes erant: ecce istìc, destruens angelus percussit; et tam læthalis plagæ stigma post se reliquit. Sub hoc signo solemus alibi pugnare alacres, victoriamque reportare: quare ita nunc istud horremus domi?

O Deus, tu pro nobis, alibi, pugnas; hìc, contra nos. Sub illo, nos pro te dimicavimus; sub hoc verò, quoniam peccata nostra contra nos dimicârunt, judiciis tuis oppugnamur. Et tamen, O Deus, crux tua est, quantumlibet gravis: nostra quidem, merito; inflictione verò, tua. Domine, afflictionem tuam sanctifica; tolle iram.

On the change of weather.

LXXIII. *Ad cœli mutationem vicissitudinemque.*

I KNOW not whether it be worse, that the heavens look upon us always with one face, or ever varying: for, as continual change

NESCIO insalubriusne esset, cœlum nos unâ semper facie contueri, an semper variâ: nam, ut continua quædam cœli mutatio

of weather causes uncertainty of health, so a permanent settledness of one season causeth a certainty of distemper. Perpetual moisture dissolves us: perpetual heat evaporates, or inflames us: cold stupifies us: drought obstructs, and withers us.

Neither is it otherwise, in the state of the mind. If our thoughts should be always volatile, changing, inconstant; we should never attain to any good habit of the soul, whether in matter of judgment or disposition: but, if they should be always fixed, we should run into the danger of some desperate extremity. To be ever thinking, would make us mad: to be ever thinking of our crosses or sins, would make us heartlessly dejected; to be ever thinking of pleasures and contentments, would melt us into a loose wantonness: to be ever doubting and fearing, were a hellish servitude; to be ever bold and confident, were a dangerous presumption: but the interchanges of these in a due moderation, keep the soul in health.

O God, howsoever these variations be necessary for my spiritual condition, let me have no weather but sun-shine from thee. Do thou *lift up the light of thy countenance upon me; and stablish me ever, with thy free Spirit.*

valetudinis incertitudinem, sic et permanens unius temperiei constantia certitudinem invaletudinis necessariò producit. Dissolvit nos humiditas perpetua: perpetuus calor exhalat spiritus, inflammatve: stupefacit frigus: siccitas obstruit, arefacitque.

Nec, quoad animi statum, aliter se habet. Si cogitationes nostræ semper volatiles, variæ, ac inconstantes forent; nusquam perfectum aliquem mentis habitum, sive judicium spectemus sive dispositionem, assequeremur: si, è contrà, semper fixæ, certè periculum sine dubio perniciosi alicujus excessûs incurreremus. Semper cogitando, insaniremus planè: semper cogitando sive cruciatus nostros sive peccata, animum penitùs desponderemus; semper cogitando voluptates jucunditatesque, in luxuriosam quandam delicatamque mollitiem dissolveremur: dubitare semper ac metuere, diræ cujusdam et infernalis servitutis esset; audere verò semper et fausta quæque certissimè sibi polliceri, periculosissimæ foret præfidentiæ: horum autem omnium probè temperatæ vicissitudines, sanam vividamque animam conservant.

Utcunque tamen, O Deus, variæ mutationes istæ spirituali conditioni meæ apprimè necessariæ sint, faxis ut à te nil nisi sudum ac serenum sentiam. *Attolle tu mihi lumen vultus tui; Spirituque tuo libero, animam meam semper stabilito.*

On the sight of a marriage.

LXXIV. *Conspecto conjugii ritu publico.*

WHAT a comfortable and feeling resemblance is here of Christ and his Church! I regard not

Quàm jucunda quàmque perfecta exhibetur istìc Christi ac Ecclesiæ conjunctionis, similitu-

the persons: I regard the institution. Neither the husband, nor the wife, are now any more their own: they have either of them given over themselves to other: not only the wife, which is the weaker vessel, hath yielded over herself to the stronger protection and participation of an abler head; but the husband hath resigned his right in himself over to his feebler consort, so as now her weakness is his, his strength is hers. Yea, their very flesh hath altered property: hers, is his; his, is hers. Yea, their very soul and spirit may no more be severed, in respect of mutual affection, than from their own several bodies.

It is thus, O Saviour, with Thee and thy Church. We are not our own, but thine; who hast married us to thyself in truth and righteousness: what powers, what endowments have we, but from and in thee? And, as our holy boldness dares interest ourselves in thy graces, so thy wonderfully-compassionate mercy vouchsafes to interest thyself in our infirmities: thy poor Church suffers on earth; thou feelest in heaven; and, as complaining of our stripes, canst say, *Why persecutest thou me?* Thou, again, art not so thine own, as that thou art not also ours: thy sufferings, thy merits, thy obedience, thy life, death, resurrection, ascension, intercession, glory, yea thy blessed Humanity, yea thy glorious Deity, by virtue of our right, of our union, are so ours, as that we would not give our part in thee for ten thousand worlds.

O gracious Saviour, as thou

do! Personas non moror: institutionem cogito. Neque maritus, neque uxor, jam in propriâ potestate sunt: dediderunt sese mutuò alterutri: non modò uxor, vas fragilius, addixit se totam protectioni ac participationi capitis fortioris potentiorisque; sed et maritus ita se totum infirmiori conjugi resignavit, ut uxoris imbecillitates viro, viri autem vires ac facultates uxori cesserint. Imò, et ipsa illorum caro proprietatem suam commutaverit: uxoris quæ erat, viri est; quæ viri itidem, et uxoris. Imò, ipsorum anima spiritusque, respectu mutui affectûs, non magis à se invicem, quàm à propriis corporibus possunt separari.

Sic se habet, O Servator, inter Te et Ecclesiam tuam. Nostri non sumus, tui sumus; desponsasti tu nos tibi scilicet veritate et justitiâ: quæ nobis facultates, quæ dotes, nisi et à te et in te suppetunt? et, ut audax nostra fiducia sanctaque audacia tuas sibi gratias appropriare præsumit, ita et benignissima misericordia tua dignatur te nostris induere infirmitatibus: misella Ecclesia tua patitur in terrâ; tu sentis in cœlo; quasique de plagis ipsius conquestus, exclamas, *Quare me persequeris?* Itidem, et tu non ita tuus es, quin ut et noster interea sis: tui cruciatus, merita tua, tua obedientia, vita, mors, resurrectio, ascensio, intercessio, gloria, imò et tua beatissima Humanitas, et Divinitas gloriosissima, virtute juris in te nostri, unionisque nobiscum tuæ, ita nostri sunt, ut ne mille quidem mundi nostram in te partem redemptitare possint.

O misericors et beneficen-

canst not but love and cherish this poor and unworthy soul of mine, which thou hast mercifully espoused to thyself: so give me grace to honour and obey thee; and, forsaking all the base and sinful rivalry of the world, to hold me only unto thee while I live here, that I may perfectly enjoy thee hereafter.

tissime Servator, ut tu non potes non amare ac fovere paupercula m hanc indignamque animam, quam tu tibi ipsi desponsasti: ita et indulge mihi reciprocè gratiam hanc, ut te colam, tibi obediam; spretisque vilibus vitiosisque procantis mundi blandimentis, me tibi totum dum hìc superero unicè servem, ut te deinceps æternùm fruar postmodum.

LXXV.

On the sight of a snake. *Conspecto angue.*

I KNOW not what horror we find in ourselves at the sight of a serpent. Other creatures are more loathsome; and some no less deadly, than it: yet there is none, at which our blood riseth so much as at this. Whence should this be, but out of an instinct of our old enmity? We were stung in paradise; and cannot but feel it. But, here is our weakness: it was not the body of the serpent, that could have hurt us, without the suggestion of sin; and yet, we love the sin, while we hate the serpent.

Every day are we wounded with the sting of that old serpent, and complain not: and so much more deadly is that sting, by how much it is less felt. There is a sting of guilt; and there is a sting of remorse: there is mortal venom in the first, whereof we are the least sensible; there is less danger, in the second. The Israelites found themselves stung by those fiery serpents in the desert; and the sense of their pain sent them to seek for cure. The world, is our desert: and, as *the sting of death is sin;* so the sting of sin,

NESCIO quis nobis ad conspectum serpentis horror oboriatur. Deformiora sunt animalia quædam alia; sed et quædam etiam illis, non minùs mortifera: nullum tamen est, quo viso, æquè resilit sanguis noster obrigetque. Unde fieri potest hoc, nisi ex quodam veteris inimicitiæ instinctu? Percussi olim fuimus in paradiso, venenato hujus aculeo; neque non adhuc sentire possumus lethale illud virus. O nostram, tamen, fatuitatem: ipsum serpentis illius corpus nobis nocere non potuerat, absque suggestione peccati; et tamen, peccatum diligimus, odimus serpentem.

Quotidie veteris illius serpentis stimulo vulneramur, et non conquerimur: et aculeus ille tanto magis perimit, quo sentitur minùs. Est aculeus quidam reatûs; est et aculeus doloris: in illo mortiferum virus est, cujus nos quidem sensum habemus minimum; in hoc, minus est periculi. Ab ardentibus illis in deserto serpentibus morsos se deprehenderunt Israelitæ; sensusque doloris eos illico ad quærendum remedium instigavit. Ecce desertum nostrum, mundus est: et, ut *stimulus mortis est peccatum;* ita et stimulus pec-

is death. I do not more wish to find ease, than pain. If I complain enough, I cannot fail of cure.

O thou, which art the true Brazen Serpent, lifted up in this wilderness, raise up mine eyes to thee, and fasten them upon thee. Thy mercy shall make my soul whole; my wound, sovereign.

cati, mors. Non medelam magis opto, quàm dolorem. Si satis dolere ac queri possim, non sanari quidem non potero.

O tu, qui verus es Serpens ille æneus, palam in deserto elevatus, tolle oculos ad te meos, eosque in te fige. Misericordia tua et animam meam sanam faciet; et vel ipsum vulnus, medicinam.

On the ruins of an abbey.

LXXVI. *Visis monasterii cujusdam ruinis.*

It is not so easy to say, what it was, that built up these walls; as what it was, that pulled them down: even the wickedness of the possessors. Every stone hath a tongue, to accuse the superstition, hypocrisy, idleness, luxury of the late owners. Methinks, I see it written all along, in capital letters, upon these heaps, *A fruitful land maketh he barren, for the iniquity of them that dwell therein.* Perhaps, there wanted not some sacrilege in the demolishers. In all the carriage of these businesses, there was a just hand, that knew how to make an wholesome and profitable use of mutual sins. Full little did the builders or the in-dwellers think, that this costly and warm fabric should so soon end violently in a desolate rubbish.

It is not for us to be high-minded, but to fear. No roof is so high, no wall so strong, as that sin cannot level it with the dust. Were any pile so close, that it could keep out air; yet it could not keep out judgment, where sin hath been fore-admitted. In vain shall we promise stability to those houses, which we have made witnesses of and

Non ita facile dictu est, quid parietes istos olim extruxerit; ac quid modò dejecerit: ipsa nempe dominorum nequitia. Unicuique lapidi lingua est, quæ nuperorum possessorum superstitionem, hypocrisin, otium, luxuriam subincuset. Videor mihi, videre in unâquaque harum congerie, majusculis characteribus, inscriptum, *Terram frugiferam sterilem reddit, ob iniquitatem incolentium.* Non defuit, fortè, aliquod in demolitoribus ædium istarum sacrilegii. In toto quidem negotio hoc, justa quædam manus fuit, quæ mutua hominum peccata ad sanum salubremque usum redigere noverat. Parùm profectò cogitârant vel architecti vel incolæ, tam sumptuosam commodèque constructam fabricam adeò citò violenterque in desertis ruderibus desituram.

Non est quòd nos efferamur animo, sed timeamus. Nullum ita altum tectorium est, nullus paries tam firmus, quem peccatum solo pulverique æquare non possit. Esto moles quæpiam tam accuratè fabricata clausaque, ut ne aerem quidem ipsum admittat; peccatum intromiserit modò, judicium Dei frustra excludere tentaverit. Nequicquam

accessaries to our shameful uncleannesses: the firmness of any building, is not so much in the matter, as in the owner. Happy is that cottage, that hath an honest master; and woe be to that palace, that is viciously inhabited.

profectò stabilitatem ædibus illis pollicebimur, quas nos turpissimæ immunditiæ nostræ et testes et reas usque fecerimus: ædificii cujusque firmitudo, non tam materiæ adscribenda est, quàm domino. Fœlix illa casa est, quæ honestum sortita est dominum; væ palatio, cui vitiosus obtigit habitator.

LXXVII.

On the discharging of a piece. *Ad displosionem bombardæ.*

Good Lord, how witty men are, to kill one another! What fine devices they have found out, to murder afar off; to slay many at once; and so to fetch off lives, that, while a whole lane is made of carcases with one blow, nobody knows who hurt him! And what honour do we place in slaughter! Those arms, wherein we pride ourselves, are such, as which we or our ancestors have purchased with blood: the monuments of our glory, are the spoils of a subdued and slain enemy. Where, contrarily, all the titles of God sound of mercy, and gracious respects to man: God the Father, is the Maker and Preserver of men: God the Son, is the Saviour of mankind: God the Holy Ghost, styles himself the Comforter. Alas, whose image do we bear, in this disposition; but his, whose true title is, *The Destroyer?* It is easy, to take away the life: it is not easy, to give it. Give me the man, that can devise, how to save troops of men from killing: his name shall have room in my Calendar. There is more true honour in a civic garland, for the preserving of one subject; than in a laurel, for the victory of many enemies.

Deus Bone, quàm ingeniosi sunt homines, se trucidandis invicem! Quàm bellas excogitârunt machinas, quibus se à longè possint mutuò occidere; atque ita vitam adimere, ut, dum phalanges totæ uno ictu prosternuntur, nemo nôrit quis se læserit! Quantum verò honoris in cæde mutuâ collocamus! Illa insignia, quibus superbimus, ejusmodi sunt, quæ aut nos aut proavi nostri sanguine comparavimus: gloriæ nostræ monumenta quid aliud sunt, nisi victi occisique hostis spolia? Ubi, è contrà, tituli omnes Divini misericordiam sonant, summamque erga genus humanum benignitatem: Deus Pater, Creator est hominum Conservatorque: Deus Filius, humani generis Servator: Spiritus denique Sanctus, Consolatorem seipsum indigitat. Væ mihi, cujus imago est quam nos, ita ferociter affecti, gestamus; nisi illius, cui verus titulus est, *Homicida ab initio?* Vitam quidem auferre, facile est: non ita facile, restituere. Cedo mihi hominem, qui rationem adinvenire possit totas hominum cohortes, ab occisione conservandi: sacrum illi erit in Calendario meo ac rubricatum nomen. Plus veri honoris est in coronâ civicâ, unius subditi fidelis ser-

O God, there are enough, that bend their thoughts, to undo what thou hast made: enable thou me, to bestow my endeavours, in reprieving or rescuing that, which might otherwise perish. O thou, who art our common Saviour, make thou me both ambitious and able, to help to save some, other besides myself.

vati causâ; quàm in laureâ, plurimis devictis hostibus.

O Deus, satis illorum hominum est, qui animum in id unum intendunt, ut quæ tu fecisti destruant: inde tu mihi, excitaque et animum et operam, ut servare quoquo modo possim ac redimere peritura. O tu, qui communis es nostrûm omnium Servator, indulge mihi et ambitionem et facultatem, alium aliquem, præter meipsum, ad salutem perducendi.

On the tolling of a passing-bell.

LXXVIII. *Audito campanæ sono moribundi cujusdam obitum præmonentis.*

How doleful and heavy is this summons of death! This sound is not for our ears, but for our hearts: it calls us not only to our prayers, but to our preparation; to our prayers, for the departing soul; to our preparation, for our own departing. We have never so much need of prayers, as in our last combat: then is our great Adversary most eager: then are we the weakest: then nature is so overlaboured, that it gives us not leisure, to make use of gracious motions. There is no preparation, so necessary, as for this conflict: all our life is little enough to make ready for our last hour. What am I better than my neighbours? How oft hath this bell reported to me, the farewell of many more strong and vigorous bodies than my own; of many more cheerful and lively spirits! And now what doth it, but call me to the thought of my parting? Here is no abiding for me: I must away too.

Quàm tristis ac lugubris est hæc mortis summonitio! Sonus iste non aures nostras ferire debet, sed pectora: neque modò preces nostras exigit, sed apparatum; preces quidem, pro decessurâ statim animâ; nostri verò decessûs, apparatum. Nusquam profectò æquè precibus indigemus, ac in ultimo hoc certamine: tunc etenim, et nos ferocissimè aggreditur dirus ille Hostis, et nos illi resistendo maximè impares sumus: tunc ita opprimitur natura, ut parum suppetat otii, sanctos motus aut eliciendi aut revocandi quidem. Nihil quicquam occurrere potest, quod æquè præparationem nostram requirat, atque pugna hæc ultima: tota vita nostra vix sufficit extremæ huic horæ. Quis ego sum, aut quò tandem melior vicinis? Quoties retulit mihi campana hæc ipsa, exitum multorum robustiorum magisque vividorum corporum; spirituum alacriorum vivaciorumque! Nunc verò quid, nisi me revocat ad seriam egressûs mei cogitationem? Non est quòd istìc morari sperem: abeundum est mihi quoque.

O thou, that art the God of Comfort, help thy poor servant, that is now struggling with his last enemy. His sad friends stand gazing upon him, and weeping over him; but they cannot succour him: needs must they leave him, to do this great work alone: none, but thou, *to whom belong the issues of death*, canst relieve his distressed and over-matched soul. And, for me, let no man die without me: as I die daily, so teach me to die once: acquaint me beforehand with that messenger, which I must trust to. *Oh, teach me so to number my days, that I may apply my heart to true wisdom.*

O tu, qui Miserationum omnium Deus es, propitius esto misello servo tuo, qui jam modò cum novissimo illo hoste conflictatur. Amici ejus mœsti illum circumstant, et intuentur intentiùs, moribundoque allachrymantur; cui succurrere parùm possunt: necesse est eum sibi relinquant, ut magnum hoc opus sibi solus transigat: nemo, præter te solum, *penes quem sunt mortis exitus*, miseram hanc et tantis hostibus imparem congressam animam relevare potest. Et, quod me attinet, sine me nemo proximorum moriatur: uti ego quotidie morior, ita doce me mori semel: fac me præmanu familiarem illi nuntio, qui mihi necessariò expectandus est. *Doce me sic numerare dies meos, ut cor meum veræ addicam sapientiæ.*

LXXIX.

On a defamation dispersed.

WERE I the first or the best, that ever was slandered, perhaps it would be somewhat difficult, to command myself patience. Grief is wont to be abated, either by partners, or precedents: the want whereof dejects us beyond measure, as men singled out for patterns of misery. Now, while I find this the common condition of all, that ever have been reputed virtuous, why am I troubled with the whisperings of false tongues *?

O God, the Devil slandered thee in paradise. O Saviour,

Defamatione quâdam divulgatâ.

SI vel primus ego vel optimus omnium essem, cui probra immeritò fuissent ingesta, difficilius fortè foret, patientiam mihi imperare. Aut participatione, aut exemplis, imminui solet dolor: quibus utrisque ubi destituimur, supra modum dejici solemus, acsi miseriarum archetypi quidam designaremur. Nunc verò, quandoquidem communem hanc omnium, qui virtutem unquam coluere, conditionem comperio, quorsum ego falsiloquarum linguarum sibilationibus ita nimiùm crucior?

O Deus, ipsum te defamavit, Diabolus in paradiso. Te verò,

* *Si Christus Judam passus est, cur non ego patior Birrhichionem?* Dial. de S. Martino, Sever. Sulpit.

men slandered thee on earth, more than men or devils can reproach me. Thou art the best, as thou art the best, that ever was smitten by a lying and venomous tongue. It is too much favour, that is done me by malicious lips, that they conform me to thy sufferings: I could not be so happy, if they were not so spiteful. O thou glorious pattern of reproached innocence, if I may not die for thee, yet let me thus bleed with thee.

O Servator, contumeliis magis impetierunt homines in terrâ, quàm nos impetere possunt homines dæmonesve. Tu, qui omnium optimus es, eminentissimus etiam illorum omnium es, qui mendaci venenatâque linguâ unquam fuêre sauciati. Nimiùm mihi favent linguæ hæ maledicæ, quòd me tuis passionibus conformem præstent: nisi illæ ita invidæ ac mordaces essent, ego certè ita fœlix esse non possem. O tu, qui gloriosissimum es innocentiæ contumeliosè exceptæ exemplar, quandoquidem pro te mori non liceat, da mihi saltem tecum vel sic vulnerari.

On a ring of bells.

LXXX. *Audito quodam campanarum concentu.*

WHILE every bell keeps due time and order, what a sweet and harmonious sound they make! All the neighbour villages are cheered with that common music: but when once they jar and check each other; either jangling together, or striking preposterously; how harsh, and unpleasing is that noise! So that, as we testify our public rejoicing, by an orderly and well-tuned peal; so, when we would signify that the town is on fire, we ring confusedly.

It is thus in Church and Commonwealth. When every one knows and keeps their due ranks, there is a melodious concert of peace and contentment; but, when distances and proportions of respects are not mutually observed, when either states or persons will be clashing with each other, the discord is grievous and extremely preju-

DUM tempus suum atque ordinem servant hæ campanæ, quàm suavem harmonicumque sonum edunt! Villulæ quæque vicinæ communi hoc concentu recreantur: ubi verò discors sonant, alteraque alteri obstrepit; sive coincidente sonitu, sive præposterè se ingerente; quàm injucundus est stridor ille, et haud parùm ingratus! Ita ut, qui gaudium publicum, benè ordinatâ regularique campanarum pulsatione, testari solemus; domorum itidem combustionem, confuso earundem sonitu, significemus.

Et sic quidem in Ecclesiâ ac Republicâ se habet. Ubi unusquisque suum novit locum ordinemque, suavissima est pacis contentationisque harmonia; sed, ubi debita intervalla respectumque mutuorum proportiones justæ parùm observantur, ubi aut imperia aut personæ discordi quodam sibi clangore intersonant, gravissimæ lites incidunt

dicial. Such confusion either notifieth a fire already kindled, or portendeth it. Popular states may ring the changes with safety: but the Monarchical government requires a constant and regular course, of the set degrees of rule and inferiority; which cannot be violated, without a sensible discontentment and danger. For me, I do so love the peace of the Church and State, that I cannot but, with the charitable Apostle, say, *Would to God, they were cut off that trouble them;* and shall ever wish, either no jars, or no clappers.

ac utrisque fortasse perniciosæ. Confusio scilicet hujusmodi incendium commune vel innuit, vel certè portendit. Populares siquæ sint administrationes campanarum seriem facilè ac fortè etiam tutò variare possunt: regimen verò Monarchicum, constantem quendam regularemque ordinem, fixosque et dominii et subjectionis gradus efflagitat; qui quidem, absque manifesto præjudicio ac discrimine, violari non possunt. Me quod spectat, ita ego impensè diligo Ecclesiæ ac Reipublicæ pacem, ut non possim, cum plenissimo illo quidem charitatis Apostolo, non optare *Utinam exscindantur qui istam conturbant;* campanasque omnes cupiam, vel concordes, vel sanè elingues.

LXXXI.

On the sight of a full table at a feast.

WHAT great variety is here, of flesh, of fish; of both, of either: as if both nature and art did strive to pamper us! Yet methinks, enough is better than all this. Excess is but a burden; as to the provider, so to the guest. It pities and grieves me, to think what toil, what charge hath gone, to the gathering of all these dainties together; what pain so many poor creatures have been put to, in dying for a needless sacrifice to the belly; what a penance must be done by every accumbent, in sitting out the passage through all these dishes; what a task the stomach must be put to, in the concoction of so many mixtures. I am not so austerely scrupulous, as to deny the lawfulness of these abundant provisions, upon

Conspecto benè instructo convivio.

QUANTA istìc varietas est, carnium, piscium; utrorumque, neutrorumque: quasi et ars et natura saginationi nostræ ac deliciis conspirarent! Meo certè tamen animo, nimio hoc omni melius est quod est satis. Excessus iste oneri est; et domino, et hospiti. Dolet mihi quidem cogitare, quis labor, qui sumptus conquirendis hisce tot cupediis necessariò insumendi fuerint; quantum cruciatûs subierint tot misera animalcula, moriendo ut superfluo semel sacrificio ventri immolarentur; sed et quanta accumbentibus pœna incumbit, usque sedendi donec per omnia hæc fercula suo quodam ordine transierint; quantum denique stomacho provinciæ demandatur, tot ciborum misturas unà concoquendi. Non ita austerè rigidus

just occasions: I find my Saviour himself, more than once, at a feast: this is recorded, as well as his one long fast. Doubtless, our bountiful God hath given us his creatures, not for necessity only, but for pleasure: but these exceedings should be both rare and moderate; and, when they must be, require no less patience than temperance.

Might I have my option, O God, give me rather a little, with peace and love. He, whose provision for every day was thirty measures of fine flour and threescore measures of meal, thirty oxen, a hundred sheep, besides venison and fowl, yet can pray, *Give me the bread of sufficiency.* Let me have no *perpetual feast*, but *a good conscience:* and, from these great preparations, for the health both of soul and body, let me rise, rather hungry than surcharged.

sum, ut largos hosce apparatus, ubi res postulat, parùm licere censeam: etiam Servatorem meum, non semel, convivio accumbentem comperio: et hoc non minùs, quàm diuturnum illius jejunium unicum, memoratur. Proculdubio, munificus Deus noster creaturas nobis suas, non necessitatis ergò solum, sed et voluptátis, impertiit: excessus tamen isti, et rari sint oportet, et non nimii; et, ubi sunt, non minus patientiæ profectò, quàm temperantiæ desiderant.

Optio si mihi mea detur, panxillum mihi sit, cum pace et charitate. Ille, cui quotidianum dimensum erat, triginta cori similæ et sexaginta cori farinæ, boves triginta, centum oves, præter ferinam volucresque saginatas, precatur tamen, *Da mihi panem sufficientiæ.* Nullum mihi *perpetuum convivium* sit, præter *bonam conscientiam:* ab istis verò lautis largisque epulis, liceat mihi, pro et animæ et corporis sanitate, fame potiùs quàm crapulâ laboranti, surgere.

LXXXII.

On the hearing of a lute well played on.

Auditâ lyrâ benè pulsatâ.

THERE may be, for ought we know, infinite inventions of art, the possibility whereof we should hardly ever believe, if they were fore-reported to us. Had we lived in some rude and remote part of the world; and should have been told, that it is possible, only by a hollow piece of wood, and the guts of beasts stirred by the fingers of men, to make so sweet and melodious a noise; we should have thought it utterly incredible: yet now,

INFINITA fortassis esse possunt artis inventa, quorum possibilitatem, famæ talia alicubi posse fieri referenti, vix profectò crederemus. Si in rudiore aliquâ remotioreque mundi plagâ vixissemus; audivissemusque, fieri posse, ut ab excavatis dolatisque lignis, bestiarumque illiis motis parumper humanâ manu, tam suavis harmonicusque sonus ederetur; nos plane incredibile putassemus: nunc verò, cùm hoc vulgo fieri et videamus et audia-

that we see and hear it ordinarily done, we make it no wonder.

It is no marvel, if we cannot fore-imagine what kind and means of harmony, God will have used by his saints and angels in heaven; when these poor matters seem so strange to our conceits, which yet our very senses are convinced of.

O God, thou knowest infinite ways to glorify thyself by thy creatures, which do far transcend our weak and finite capacities. Let me wonder at thy wisdom and power; and be more awful in my adorations, than curious in my inquiries.

mus quotidie, ne miramur quidem.

Mirum non est, si nos præcogitare nequeamus, sive generâ sive modos harmoniæ illius supernæ, quam a sanctis angelisque in cœlo usurpâri voluit Deus; cùm minima hæc, quorum sensus noster facilè convincitur, ita nimis admiranda videantur.

Nôsti tu, O Deus, infinitas temetipsum per creaturas tuas te glorificandi rationes, quæ finitum ingenioli nostri captum longissimè transcendunt. Fac sapientiam tuam potentiamque usque stupeam; simque adorando humilior, quàm curiosior inquirendo.

On the sight and noise of a peacock. LXXXIII. *Viso et audito pavone.*

I SEE there are many kinds of hypocrites. Of all birds, this makes the fairest shew, and the worst noise: so as this is a hypocrite to the eye. There are others, as the blackbird, that looks foul and sooty; but sings well: this is a hypocrite to the ear. There are others, that please us well, both in their shew and voice; but are cross in their carriage and condition; as the popingay, whose colours are beautiful, and noise delightful; yet is it apt to do mischief, in scratching and biting any hand, that comes near it: these are hypocrites both to the eye and ear. Yet there is a degree further, beyond the exampl. of all brute creatures, of them, whose shew, whose words, whose actions are fair; but their hearts are foul, and abominable. No outward beauty can make the hypocrite other than odious. For me, let my profession agree

VIDEO hypocritarum non unum esse genus. Inter omnes alitum species, hic, et pulcherrimus videtur, et sonat ingratissimè: ita ut hic hypocritam se præstet oculo. Sunt et alii, huic adversi, uti merula, quæ nigra videtur; cantat tamen optimè: hypocrita nempe illa auri est. Sunt et alii, qui, et specie et voce, sat nobis placent; moribus verò ac gestu offendunt; qualis est psittacus, cujus colores venusti sunt, sonus non injucundus; mordere tamen solet ille, proximamque manum quamque unguibus inipetere: hic et oculo et auri hypocrita est. Gradus tamen adhuc ulterior, præter irrationalium omnium exemplum, eorum est, scilicet, quorum species, voces, gestus, moresque, non perplacere non possunt; corda tamen fœdissima sint, et horrendâ impietate plena. Externæ venustatis non est, hypocritam facere

with my words, my words with my actions, my actions with my heart; and let all of them be approved of the God of Truth.

non verè turpem et odiosum. Quod ad me, curæ mihi sit, ut professio mea cum verbis, verba cum actionbus, actiones cum corde conspirent; utque omnia hæc à Deo Veritatis approbentur.

On a penitent malefactor.

LXXXIV. *De scelerato quodam seriò pœnitente.*

I KNOW not whether I should more admire the wisdom or the mercy of God, in his proceedings with men. Had not this man sinned thus notoriously, he had never been thus happy. While his courses were fair and civil; yet he was graceless: now, his miscarriage hath drawn him into a just affliction; his affliction hath humbled him. God hath taken this advantage of his humiliation, for his conversion. Had not one foot slipped into the mouth of hell, he had never been in this forwardness to heaven.

There is no man so weak or foolish, as that he hath not strength or wit enough, to sin, or to make ill use of his sin: it is only the goodness of an Infinite God, that can make our sin good to us, though evil in itself.

O God, it is no thank to ourselves or to our sins, that we are bettered with evil. The work is thine: let thine be the glory.

NESCIO mirernè magis sapientiam an misericordiam Dei, in rebus humanis administrandis. Nisi ita flagitiosè peccâsset hic homo, nunquam tam fœlix fuisset. Dum se inculpatè gesserat priùs; gratiâ interim destituebatur: nunc, illud in quod inciderat crimen gravissimam ipsi calamitatem superintulit; humiliavit eum illa calamitas. Humiliationis istius ansam arripuit Deus, homini opportunè convertendo. Ni pes illi unus in os inferni collapsus fuisset, nunquam profectò ita cœlo appropinquasset.

Nemo hominum ita væcors aut imbecillus est, ut cui parùm suppetant ingenium viresque, et peccandi, et peccato utendi pessimè: una Infiniti Numinis bonitas est, quæ peccatum, in se malum, nobis commodum ac salutare potest efficere.

O Deus, nihil nobis peccatisve nostris debemus, quòd malis nostris melioremur. Opus tuum est: tua solius sit gloria.

On the sight of a lily.

LXXXV. *Ad conspectum liliorum.*

THIS must needs be a goodly flower, that our Saviour hath singled out, to compare with Solomon; and that not in his ordinary dress, but in all his royalty. Surely, the earth had never,

NON potest non esse flos pulcherrimus, quem selegit Servator noster, ipsi Solomoni; non quotidiano quidem habitu, induto, sed splendore regio jam tum ornatissimo; conferendum. Cer-

so glorious a king as he. Nature yielded nothing, that might set forth royal magnificence, that he wanted: yet he, that made both Solomon and this flower, says, that *Solomon, in all his royalty, was not clad like it.*

What a poor thing is this earthly bravery, that is so easily overmatched! How ill judges are we of outward beauties, that contemn these goodly plants, which their Creator thus magnifies; and admire those base metals, which he, in comparison hereof, contemns! If it be their transitoriness, that embaseth them, what are we? *All flesh is grass; and all the glory of man, as the flower of grass.* As we cannot be so brave, so we cannot be more permanent.

O God, let it be my ambition, to walk with thee hereafter in white. Could I put on a robe of stars here, with proud Herod, that glittering garment could not keep me from lice or worms. Might I sit on a throne of gold within a house of ivory, I see I should not compare with this flower: I might be as transitory; I should not be so beautiful. What matters it, whether I go for a flower, or a weed, here? Whethersoever, I must wither. O thou, which art greater than Solomon, do thou clothe me with thy perfect righteousness: so shall I flourish for ever, in the courts of the house of my God.

tè, nullus unquam rex terræ fuit, æquè ac ille gloriosus. Nihil sanè produxit natura, regiæ magnificentiæ illustrandæ idoneum, quod ipsi defuit: ille tamen, qui utrunque et Solomonem et florem hunc fecerat, ait, *Solomonem, vel regio apparatu insignem, huic flori parem non fuisse.*

Quàm frivola est terrena istæc gloria, quæ tam facilè potest exuperari! Quàm iniqui sumus nos formarum externarum judices, qui speciosas hasce plantas, quas ita laudat Creator, adeò contemnimus; admiramurque viliora quæque metalla, quæ ille, istarum habitâ ratione, contemnit! Quid vero est? nunquid istæ tam citâ aritudine vilescunt? at nos ipsi quid sumus? *Omnis caro fœnum; et omnis gloria hominis, ut flos agri.* Ut nos æquè speciosi esse non possumus, ita neque magis permanentes.

O Deus, illa mihi ambitio esto, tecum postmodò albis indutum ambulare. Vestem si ego istìc stellis ornatam, cum superbo Herode, gestavero, splendida illa toga non me poterit à pediculis vermiculisve vindicare. Insiderem modò throno aureo in domo eburneâ, cum istoc tamen flore minimè forem comparandus: æquè certè caducus esse possem; non æquè speciosus. Quid refert, pro florenè, hic, habear, an herba noxia? Uterlibet sim, arescam necesse est. O tu, qui major es Solomone, indue me perfectâ justitiâ tuâ: sic ego, in atriis domûs Dei mei, æternùm efflorescam.

LXXXVI.

On the sight of a coffin stuck with flowers.

Too fair appearance, is never free from just suspicion. While

Visâ sandapilâ floribus ornatâ.

Quæ nimis pulchra videntur, vix unquam à justâ suspicione im-

here was nothing but mere wood, no flower was to be seen here: now, that this wood is lined with an unsavoury corpse, it is adorned with this sweet variety. The fir, whereof that coffin is made, yields a natural redolence alone: now, that it is stuffed thus noisomely, all helps are too little to countervail that scent of corruption.

munia sunt. Dum nil præter lignum hìc fuit, nullus istoc flos decorabat: nunc, ubi lignum hoc olido farcitur cadavere, suavissimâ hâc florum varietate adornatur illico. Abiegna hæc sandapila, de se quidem suaviter redolet: fœtidum verò hunc hospitem nacta, ita nimis florum adminiculo indiget, ut, ne horum omnium ope, putridum hunc odorem evincere possit.

Neither is it otherwise in the living: perpetual use of strong perfumes, argues a guiltiness of some unpleasing savour. The case is the same spiritually: an over-glorious outside of profession, implies some inward filthiness, that would fain escape notice. *Our uncomely parts have more comeliness put on.* Too much ornament imports extreme deformity. For me, let my shew be moderate: so shall I neither deceive applause, nor merit too deep censure.

Neque aliter se in vivis habet: perpetuus unguentorum aromaticorum usus, malesuavis cujusdam odoris reatum secretum arguit. Idem etiam spiritualiter usuvenit: nimis gloriosa professionis facies, internam aliquam fœditatem, quæ lucem refugit, vulgò innuit. *Partes magis pudendas minùsque decoras, vestimus honoratiùs.* Nimium ornamenti intolerandam deformitatem subindicat. Quod ad me, nil nisi mediocre ac moderatum ostentem: ita neque fallam applausum, neque nimium merebor censuræ.

LXXXVII.

On the view of the world. *Conspectâ mundi fabricâ.*

It is a good thing, to see this material world; but it is a better thing, to think of the intelligible world. This thought is the sight of the soul, whereby it discerneth things like itself, spiritual and immortal; which are so much beyond the worth of these sensible objects, as a spirit is beyond a body, a pure substance beyond a corruptible, an Infinite God above a finite creature.

Vel materialem hunc mundum cernere, bonum est; melius tamen, mundum intelligibilem cogitare. Cogitatio hæc animæ quædam visio est, quâ res sui similes, spirituales scilicet immortalesque contemplatur; quæ quidem objecta, sensibilia quæquæ non minùs exuperant, quàm spiritus materiam corpoream, substantia pura corruptibilem, Deus Infinitus finitam creaturam, transcendit.

O God, how great a word is that, which the Psalmist says of thee, That thou *abasest thyself, to behold the things both in heaven*

O Deus, quale illud Psaltis de te tui verbum est, *Humiliare te nempe temetipsum, ut contempleris et quæ in cælo sunt et quæ in*

and earth! It is our glory, to look up even to the meanest piece of heaven: it is an abasement to thine incomprehensible Majesty, to look down upon the best of heaven. * Oh, what a transcendent glory must that needs be, that is abased to behold the things of heaven! What a happiness shall it be to me, that mine eyes shall be exalted to see thee, who art humbled to see the place and state of my blessedness! Yea, those very angels, that see thy face, are so resplendently glorious, that we could not overlive the sight of one of their faces, who are fain to hide their faces from the sight of thine. How many millions attend thy throne above, and thy footstool below, in the ministration to thy Saints! It is that thine invisible world, the communion wherewith can make me truly blessed. O God, if my body have fellowship here amongst beasts, of whose earthly substance it participates; let my soul be united to thee, the God of Spirits; and be raised up to enjoy the insensible society of thy blessed angels. Acquaint me beforehand with those citizens and affairs of thy heaven; and make me no stranger to my future glory.

terrâ! Haud parum nobis gloriæ est, vel infimam cœli partem contueri: humiliatio verò quædam tui est, vel optimam cœli partem despicere. Quanta mihi fœlicitas erit, adeò exaltatum iri oculos meos ut te videant, cujus tam immensa est gloria, ut vel locum statumque beatitudinis meæ videre, quoddam demissionis genus sit! Imò, ipsi illi angeli, qui faciem tuam adspiciunt, ita gloriosi sunt, ut si quam unius istorum faciem intueremur, tantæ nos gloriæ diutius superesse non possemus, qui tamen interea faciem suam ab aspectu tui splendoris abscondunt. Quot horum myriades, et throno tuo in cœlis, et scabello in terris, Sanctis istìc tuis, ministraturæ, sive adstant, sive provolvuntur! Mundus ille tuus alter invisibilis, is est, cujus communio nos verè fœlices præstare potest. O Deus, si corpus meum hìc cum brutis, quorum terrenam substantiam participat, versetur; uniatur anima mea tecum, Spirituum Deo; et ad insensibilis beatorum tuorum angelorum societatis fruitionem elevetur. Fac præ manu intercedat mihi cum civibus rebusque cœli tui sancta quædam familiaritas; neque sim futuræ gloriæ hospes ac peregrinus.

LXXXVIII.

On the stinging of a wasp. *De vespæ aculeo.*

How small things may annoy the greatest! Even a mouse troubles an elephant; a gnat, a lion: a very flea may disquiet a giant. What weapon can be nearer to nothing, than the sting of this wasp? yet, what a painful wound hath it given me!

Quàm minima possunt vel maximis molestiam facessere! Mus elephantum, culex leonem, imò vel pulex gigantem, vexare potest. Ecquod telum minus esse potest vespæ aculeo? quantum tamen doloris, vel ex tantillo hujus ictu sentio! Vix visibilis

* This sentence is omitted in the Latin. EDITOR.

That scarce-visible point how it envenoms, and rankles, and swells up the flesh! The tenderness of the part adds much to the grief.

And if I be thus vexed with the touch of an angry fly, Lord, how shall I be able to endure the sting of a tormenting conscience? As that part, is both most active, and most sensible; so, that wound, which it receives from itself, is most intolerably grievous: there were more ease in a nest of hornets, than under this one torture. O God, howsoever I speed abroad, give me peace at home; and, whatever my flesh suffer, keep my soul free.

Thus pained, wherein do I find ease, but in laying honey to the part infected? That medicine only abates the anguish. How near hath nature placed the remedy to the offence! Whensoever my heart is stung with the remorse for sin, only thy sweet and precious merits, O Blessed Saviour, can mitigate and heal the wound: they have virtue to cure me; give me grace to apply them: that sovereign receipt shall make my pain happy: I shall thus applaud my grief: *It is good for me that I was* thus *afflicted.*

ista acies, quàm venenavit, quàm tumefecit mihi carnem! Sed et non parum dolori addit, partis teneritas quædam et mollities.

Quòd si vel iratæ muscæ tactu minimo sic torquear, quomodo ferre potero dirum cruciatricis conscientiæ stimulum? Ut pars illa, et maximè agit, et sentit exquisitissimè; ita, vulnus, quod sibi infligit, necesse est ut supra modum grave sit et dolorificum: tutiùs profectò quis inter crabronum examina volutaretur, quàm uni hujus cruciatui subjaceret. O Deus, quicquid de me forìs fiat, da mihi pacem domi; et, quicquid caro mea patiatur, animam mihi sanam servato et incolumen.

Ecquod verò sic cruciato remedium, nisi parte affectâ melle statim illitâ? Ea sola medicina dolorem minuit. Quàm prope noxam collocavit remedium natura! Quandocunque cor meum peccati aculeo pungitur, sola tua dulcissima, O Servator, preciosissimaque merita, mitigare dolorem ac sanare vulnus possunt: illa medendi virtutem habent; da mihi unà applicandi gratiam: pharmacum hoc ilicet certissimum dolorem meum faciet salutarem: sic ego cruciatui meo gratulabor: *Bonum mihi est, quòd* sic *fuerim afflictus.*

On the arraignment of a felon. LXXXIX. *Viso reo pro tribunali consistente.*

WITH what terror doth this malefactor stand at that bar! his hand trembles, while it is lift up for his trial: his very lips quake, while he saith, Not guilty: his countenance condemns him, before the judge; and his fear is ready to execute him, before his hangman. Yet this judge is

QUANTO cum terrore pro tribunali stat reus iste! tremit illi manus, dum probationis ergò elevatur: motitantur timore labia, dum se insontem pronunciant: vel ante judicis sententiam, damnat illum facies pallida et consternata; ante carnificis manum, mortem illi metus in-

but a weak man, that must soon after die himself: that sentence of death, which he can pronounce, is already passed by nature, upon the most innocent: that act of death, which the law inflicteth by him, is but momentary: *who knows whether himself shall not die more painfully?

O God, with what horror shall the guilty soul stand before thy dreadful Tribunal, in the day of the great Assizes of the World: while there is the presence of an Infinite Majesty, to daunt him; a fierce and clamorous conscience, to give in evidence against him; legions of ugly and terrible devils, waiting to seize upon him; a gulf of unquenchable fire, ready to receive him: while the glory of the Judge is no less confounding, than the cruelty of the tormentors; where the sentence is unavoidable, and the execution everlasting! Why do not these terrors of thee, my God, make me wise, to hold a privy sessions, upon my soul and actions; that, being acquitted by my own heart, I may not be condemned by thee; and being judged by myself, I may not be condemned with the world?

fert. Judex tamen iste imbecillis homo est, post non multos dies moriturus ipse: sententia, quam fert ille, mortis, jamdudum à naturâ ipsâ in hominem quemque, vel innocentissimum, lata est: sed et actus ille mortis, quem per eum lex infligit, brevis et momentaneus est.

O Deus, quanto cum horrore consistet coram tremendo Tribunali tuo peccatrix reprobi anima, in die magni illius Consessûs universalisque Judicii: terrebit eam Infinitæ Majestatis præsentia; ferox ac clamosa conscientia eam accusabit; deformium ac terribilium dæmonum legiones in procinctu stant, rapere; eam ad supplicium paratissimæ ignis inextinguibilis horrenda vorago præcipitandam expectat: quam denique non minùs confundit gloria Judicis, quàm crudelitas carnificum; ubi sententia inevitabilis est, et pœna sempiterna! Quorsum verò non ita me sagacem prudentemque reddunt terrores hi tui, O Deus, ut secretum quoddam, in animam meam actionesque, judicium exerceam; adeò ut, à corde meo absolutus, à te parùm condemner; et, à meipso judicatus, non damner cum seculo?

On the crowing of a cock. XC. *Audito galli cantu.*

How harshly did this note sound, in the ear of Peter; yea, pierced his very heart! Many a time had he heard this bird, and was no whit moved with the noise: now, there was a bird in his bosom, that crowed louder than this; whose shrill accent, conjoined with this, astonished the

Quàm asperè sonuit vox hæc, in aure Petri; imò, cor illi planè transfixit! Sæpe quidem audîerat is alitis istius sonum, neque quicquam illo priùs movebatur: nunc verò, is alitem gestabat alium in pectore, magis sonorum; cujus canori accentus, cum hisce conjuncti, conscium

* This sentence is not noticed in the Latin. EDITOR.

guilty disciple. The weary labourer, when he is awakened from his sweet sleep by this natural clock of the household, is not so angry at this troublesome bird, nor so vexed at the hearing of that unseasonable sound, as Peter was, when this fowl awakened his sleeping conscience, and called him to a timely repentance. This cock did but crow, like others; neither made or knew any difference of this tone and the rest: there was a Divine hand, that ordered this morning's note, to be a summons of penitence. He, that foretold it, had fore-appointed it: that bird could not but crow then; and all the noise in the High Priest's hall could not keep that sound from Peter's ear.

But, O Saviour, couldest thou find leisure, when thou stoodest at the bar of that unjust and cruel judgment, amidst all that bloody rabble of enemies, in the sense of all their fury and the expectation of thine own death, to listen unto this monitor of Peter's repentance; and, upon the hearing of it, to cast back thine eyes upon thy denying, cursing, abjuring disciple? O mercy without measure, and beyond all the possibility of our admiration; to neglect thyself, for a sinner! to attend the repentance of one, when thou wert about to lay down thy life for all!

O God, thou art still equally merciful. Every elect soul is no less dear unto thee. Let the sound of thy faithful monitors smite my ears, and let the beams of thy merciful eyes wound my heart: so as I may go forth, and weep bitterly.

malè discipulum penè exanimârant. Fessus labore agricola, cum à dulci somno, primo mane, à familiari hoc nativoque horologio excitatur, non ita succenset molestæ huic avi, neque adeò vexatur intempestivo hoc sono, ac Petrus fuit, ubi volucris istæc expergefecit illum ab alto sopore conscientiæ, et ad tempestivam resipiscentiam revocavit. Non aliter cecinit gallus iste, quàm alii solent; neque discrimen notarum suarum ullum sensit: Divina manus fuit, quæ matutinos hosce accentus ordinaverat, summonendæ pœnitentiæ. Qui prædixerat hoc, et prædeterminaverat itidem: non potuit non tunc canere ales ille; omnis, quantumvis confusus, strepitus, in Pontificis Maximi aulâ non potuit sonum hunc ab aure Petri intercipere ac detinere.

At, O Servator, supereratnè tibi hoc otii, dum pro tribunali stabas injusti illius crudelisque judicii, inter sanguinolentam inimicorum turbam, dum furorem ipsorum sentires tuamque expectares mortem, ut aurem dares Petrinæ resipiscentiæ monitori; auditoque hoc semel, retorqueres oculos in renegantem, execrantem, abjurantemque discipulum? O misericordiam sinè modo, supraque omnem nostræ admirationis potentiam; temetipsum negligere, præ peccatore! unius advertere ac irritare pœnitentiam, cùm jam vitam tuam pro omnibus depositurus modò esses!

O Deus, æquè tu semper misericors es. Æquè tibi chara est electa quævis anima. Fidelium monitorum tuorum sonus aurem meam usque feriat; et misericordium oculorum tuorum radii saucient cor meum: sic ego exibo, et flebo amarissimè.

On the variety of thoughts.

XCI.

De cogitationum varietate.

When I bethink myself, how eternity depends upon this moment of life, I wonder how I can think of any thing, but heaven: but, when I see the distractions of my thoughts, and the aberrations of my life, I wonder, how I can be so betwitched, as, while I believe a heaven, so to forget it. All that I can do, is, to be angry at mine own vanity. My thoughts would not be so many, if they were all right. There are ten thousand by-ways, for one direct. As there is but one heaven, so there is but one way to it; that living way, wherein I walk by faith, by obedience. All things, the more perfect they are, the more do they reduce themselves towards that unity, which is the centre of all perfection.

O thou, who art one and infinite, draw in my heart, from all these straggling and unprofitable cogitations; and confine it to thy heaven, and to thyself who art the heaven of that heaven. Let me have no life, but in thee; no care, but to enjoy thee; no ambition, but thy glory. Oh, make me thus imperfectly happy, before my time; that, when my time shall be no more, I may be perfectly happy with thee in all eternity.

Ubi cogito, quàm ab hoc vitæ momento pendet æternitas, miror posse me quid aliud, præter cœlum, meditari: ubi video cogitationum mearum distractiones varias, vitæque meæ aberrationes, miror rursum, quomodo ita possim fascinari, ut cœlum hoc, quod credo, adeò obliviscar. Quod unum modò facere possum, illud est, vanitati meæ succensere. Non ita variæ essent cogitationes meæ, si rectæ forent omnes. Pro uno directo tramite, mille sunt devia. Ut unum tantùm cœlum est, ita una est, quæ eò ducit, via; viva illa nempe via, in quâ, fide et obedientiâ ambulo. Quo perfectiora sunt omnia, eo se magis ad unitatem illam, quæ perfectionis omnis centrum est, reducunt.

O tu, qui unus es idemque infinitus, retrahe cor meum, ab omnibus vagis inutilibusque cogitationibus; affigeque me tuo cœlo, tibique ipsi qui cœli illius cœlum es. Nulla mihi, nisi in te, vita sit; nulla cura, nisi te fruendi; nulla, nisi gloriæ tuæ, ambitio. Fac me sic, ante tempus, imperfectè fœlicem; ut, ubi tempus non erit amplius, perfectè beatus esse possim per omnem æternitatem.

On the sight of a harlot carted.

XCII.

Ad conspectum meretricis plaustro exceptæ publicisque contumeliis expositæ.

With what noise, and tumult, and zeal of solemn justice, is this sin punished! The streets are not more full of beholders, than clamours. Every one strives

Quanto cum strepitu, ac tumultu, zeloque publicæ justitiæ, punitur peccatum hoc! Neque pleniores sunt plateæ spectantium oculis, quàm clamoribus in-

to express his detestation of the fact, by some token of revenge: one casts mire, another water, another rotten eggs, upon the miserable offender. Neither, indeed, is she worthy of less: but, in the mean time, no man looks home to himself. It is no uncharity to say, That too many insult in this just punishment, who have deserved more.

Alas, we men value sins, by the outward scandal; but the wise and holy God, against whom only our sins are done, esteems them, according to the intrinsical iniquity of them, and according to the secret violation of his will and justice: thus, those sins, which are slight to us, are to him heinous. We, ignorants, would have rung David's adultery with basons; but as for his numbering of the people, we should have past it over as venial: the wise justice of the Almighty found more wickedness in this, which we should scarce have accused. Doubtless, there is more mischief in a secret infidelity, which the world either cannot know or cares not to censure, than in the foulest adultery. Public sins have more shame; private may have more guilt. If the world cannot charge me of those, it is enough, that I can charge my soul of worse. Let others rejoice, in these public executions: let me pity the sins of others, and be humbled under the sense of my own.

sectantium. Contendit unusquisque odium facti, aliquo vindictæ symbolo, testari: cœnum hic, ille aquam, alius quis ova putrida, in miseram conjicit meretricem. Nec quo, certè, minore supplicio digna illa est: at nemo, interea, domum reflectit oculos, ut se videat. Nullus in charitatem peccaverim, si dixero, Multos justæ huic pœnæ insultare acriùs, qui meruerint graviorem.

Nos homines, externo quidem scandalo, peccata metimur; sed Deus ille sapientissimus sanctissimusque, cui soli peccamus, ad intrinsecæ iniquitatis modum, secretamque voluntatis et justitiæ suæ violationem, ea solet æstimare: atque ita, quæ nobis leviuscula, gravia illi delicta videri solent. Nos, fatui, Davidis adulterium plaustro ac tympanis probrosè excipiendum censuissemus; numerationem autem populi, vix culpæ quidem loco habuissemus: sapientissima verò Dei Omnipotentis justitia multum in hoc comperit criminis, quod nos ne accusâssemus quidem. Proculdubio, plus est in secreto quodam atheismo, quem mundus censurâ notare aut nescit aut parùm curat, flagitii, quàm in adulterio quovis turpissimo. Publica peccata plus habent pudoris; privata plus fortè habere possunt reatûs. Si illorum insimulare me nequeat mundus, sat est, posse me animam meam incusare graviorum. Gestiant alii, quantum volunt, in publicis hisce suppliciis: misereat me peccati aliorum, sensuque mei humilier.

On the smell of a rose. XCIII. *Ad rosæ odorem.*

SMELLING, is one of the meanest, and least useful of the senses: yet there is none of the five, that receives or gives so exquisite a contentment as it. Methinks, there is no earthly thing, that yields so perfect a pleasure to any sense, as the odour of the first rose doth to the scent.

It is the wisdom and bounty of the Creator, so to order it, that those senses, which have more affinity with the body, and with that earth whereof it is made, should receive their delight and contentation by those things, which are bred of the earth; but those, which are more sprightful, and have more affinity with the soul, should be reserved for the perfection of their pleasure, to another world. There, and then only, shall my sight make my soul eternally blessed.

ODORATUS, unus quidem est ex sensibus infimis, et qui minimo omnium inserviat usui: ex iis tamen quinque nullus est, qui æquè exquisitam voluptatem recipit redditve. Nihil quidem terrenum, ut mihi videri solet, tam perfectè sensum ullum delectat, quàm rosæ primæ odor olfactum.

Ita ordinavit sapientia et benignitas Creatoris, ut sensus ii, qui magis affines sunt corpori, terræque illi ex quâ corpus fit, suavissimè afficerentur illis rebus, quæ ex terrâ genitæ sunt; ii autem, qui magis spirituales sunt, plusque cum animâ affinitatis habent, voluptatis suæ perfectionem, velut seculo illi alteri servatam, aliundè expectarent. Tunc, et ibi solùm, visus meus animam meam præstabit æternùm fœlicem.

On a cancelled bond. XCIV. *Ad conspectum syngraphæ laceratæ et irritæ.*

WHILE this obligation was in force, I was in servitude to my parchment: my bond was double; to a payment, to a penalty: now, that is discharged, what is it better than a waste scroll; regarded for nothing, but the witness of its own voidance and nullity?

No otherwise is it with the severe law of my Creator. Out of Christ, it stands in full force: and binds me over, either to perfect obedience, which I cannot possibly perform; or to exquisite torment and eternal death, which I am never able to endure. But now, that my Saviour hath

QUAMDIU valebat illud chirographum, ego membranulæ meæ servus eram: duplex erat obligatio mea; solutioni una, altera verò pœnæ: nunc verò, ubi adimpletur conditio solviturque debitum, quid aliud est nisi irrita quædam chartula; nulli usui idonea, nisi forsan ut testis sit suæ frustrationis nullitatisque?

Neque se habet aliter severa lex Creatoris mei. Extra Christum, perfectè valet vigetque: neque vel ad absolutam, quam præstare nequeo obedientiam; vel ad cruciatum exquisitissimum mortemque æternam, quam subire nequeo; necessariò obligat. Nunc verò, cùm illam Servator

fastened it cancelled to his Cross, in respect of the rigour and malediction of it, I look upon it, as the monument of my past danger and bondage: I know, by it, how much was owed by me; how much was paid for me. The direction of it is everlasting: the obligation by it unto death is frustrate. I am free from curse, who never can be free from obedience.

O Saviour, take thou glory; and give me peace.

meus cassatam penitùs, quoad rigorem maledictionemque, Crucì suæ affixerit, respicio quidem hanc, ut prioris periculi et servitutis monumentum: hinc probè novi, quantum debuerim; quantum nomine meo solutum fuerit. Directio ejus perpetua est: obligatio ad mortem evanuit. Immunis sum à maledicto, qui ab obedientiâ meâ nunquam ero immunis.

O Servator, tu tibi sume gloriam; da mihi pacem.

On the report of a great loss by sea, XCV. *Audito naufragio quodam.*

THE earth and the water, are both of them great givers, and both great takers: as they give matter and sustentation to all sublunary creatures, so they take all back again; insatiably devouring, at last, the fruits of their own wombs. Yet of the two, the earth is both more beneficial, and less cruel: for, as that yields us the most general maintenance, and wealth, and supportation; so it doth not lightly take ought from us, but that which we resign over to it, and which natually falls back unto it. Whereas the water, as it affords but a small part of our livelihood, and some few knacks of ornament; so it is apt violently to snatch away both us and ours; and to bereave that, which it never gave: it yields us no precious metals; and yet, in an instant, fetches away millions. And yet, notwithstanding all the hard measure we receive from it, how many do we daily see, that might have firm ground under them, who yet will be trusting to the mercy of the sea! Yea, how many, that have hardly crawled out from a desperate shipwreck,

TERRA et aqua, uti benefici largitores sunt, ita et voracissimi etiam receptatores: ut materiam sustentationemque sublunaribus quibusque suppeditant, ita et eandem totam non multò post resumunt; fructum uteri sui, tandem, avidè insatiabiliterque deglutientes. Ex his tamen duobus, terra magis munifica est, et erudelis minùs: hæc etenim, ut plusculum alimoniæ, opum, supportationisque subministrat; ita vix quid unquam à nobis recipit, quod nos ipsi non lubentes ei resignaverimus, quodque in eam, vi quâdam naturæ, non sponte recidat. Ubi aqua, ut non multum nutrimenti, præter paucula quædam ad ornatum, confert; ita nos nostraque violentâ manu rapere parata est; quæque nunquam dederat, desubitò auferre: nulla nobis metalla preciosa elargitur; et tamen, momento temporis, multos auri argentique acervos unà diripit. Nihilominùs tamen, non obstante quotidianæ hujusce rapinæ tristi experientiâ, quàm multos videmus indies, quibus firmam pedibus calcare terram satis liceat, misericordiæ maris confidere etiamnum ausos!

will yet be trying the fidelity of that unsure and untrusty element!

O God, how venturous we are, where we have reason to distrust! how incredulously fearful, where we have cause to be confident! Who ever relied upon thy gracious providence and sure promises, O Lord, and hath miscarried? Yet here, we pull in our faith, and make excuses for our diffidence. And if Peter have tried those waves to be no other than solid pavement under his feet, while his soul trod confidently; yet when a billow and a wind agree to threaten him, his faith flags, and he begins to sink.

O Lord, teach me to doubt, where I am sure to find nothing but uncertainty; and, to be assuredly confident, where there can be no possibility of any cause of doubting.

Imò, quot ubique occurrunt, qui cùm vix dum periculosissimum naufragium evaserint, fidei tamen instabilis illius et malè-fidi elementi se adhuc concredere non dubitant!

O Deus, quàm nos audaces sumus, ubi meritò diffidere deberemus! quàm diffidenter timidi, ubi certissima obvenit causa fiduciæ! Quis unquam, O Domine, in benignissimam providentiam tuam firmissimaque promissa recubuit perperàm? Istìc tamen, fidem nostram anxiè retrahimus, excusationesque eudimus incredulitatis. Quòd si Petrus undas illas solidum sub pedibus suis pavimentum senserit, dum confidenter calcaverat illius anima; ubi tamen fluctus decumanus flatusque paulò violentior hominem unà adoriri consentiunt, languescere jam fides ejus, ipse verò subsidere statim incipit.

O Deus, doce me illîc dubitare, ubi nihil præter incertitudinem comperire certus sum; et, ubi nulla potest subesse dubitationis causa, securè semper confidere.

XCVI.

On sight of a bright sky full of stars.

Viso cœlo sereno stellis referto.

I CANNOT blame Empedocles, if he professed a desire to live upon earth, only that he might behold the face of the heavens: surely, if there were no other, this were a sufficient errand, for a man's being here below, to see and observe these goodly spangles of light above our heads; their places, their quantities, their motions.

But the employment of a Christian is far more noble and

EMPEDOCLEM profectò culpare nequeo, qui vitam in terrâ traducere se velle professus est, solùm ut cœli faciem intueretur: certè, si nihil nobis præterea negotii foret, satis hoc pensi esset, in hâc infimâ mundi parte, adspicere et observare scintillantia illa cœli luminaria super capita nostra regulariter circumvolventia; eorumque situs, molem, motus.

Christiani verò opus longè nobilius excellentiusque est,

excellent. Heaven is open to him; and he can look beyond the veil; and see further above those stars, than it is thither; and there discern those glories, that may answer so rich a pavement: upon the clear sight whereof, I cannot wonder, if the Chosen Vessel desired to leave the earth, in so happy an exchange.

O God, I bless thine infiniteness for what I see with these bodily eyes: but, if thou shalt but draw the curtain, and let me by the eye of faith see the inside of that thy glorious frame, I shall need no other happiness here. My soul cannot be capable of more favour, than sight here, and fruition hereafter.

Apertum est illi cœlum; is ultra velum cernere potest; altiùsque supra has stellas, quàm distant a nobis stellæ, prospicere; ibique tantum gloriæ notare, quantum tam specioso ac magnifico pavimento respondere possit: quo quidem conspecto, mirari non possum, si Vas illud Electum, tam fœlicis mutationis gloriam ambiens, terram hanc derelinquere vehementer cupîerit.

O Deus, ego, ob hæc quæ oculis usurpo meis, Infinitatem tuam summopere laudo: sed, si velum tibi placuerit retrahere tantillum, fideique meæ oculo intimam gloriosæ fabricæ tuæ partem repræsentare, non aliam quidem istîc beatitudinem desiderabo. Neque majoris favoris capax esse potest anima mea, quàm ut heic videat, fruaturque postmodò.

XCVII.

On the rumours of wars. *Audito rumore belli.*

Good Lord, what a shambles is Christendom become of late! How are men killed, like flies; and blood poured out, like water! Surely, the cruelty and ambition of the great have a heavy reckoning to make, for so many thousand souls. I condemn not just arms: those are as necessary, as the unjust are hateful. Even Michael and his Angels fight; and the style of God is, *The Lord of Hosts: But, woe be to the man, by whom the offence cometh.* Usurpation of others' rights, violation of oaths and contracts, and lastly erroneous zeal, are guilty of all these public murders. Private men's injuries are washed off with tears; but wrongs done to princes and public states, are hardly wiped off but with blood. Doubtless, that

Deus Bone, qualis laniena jam pridem factus est orbis Christianus! Quàm mactantur homines, ut muscæ; sanguisque, instar aquæ, effunditur? Certè quidem, crudelitas et ambitio magnatum tot millium peremtium animarum rationem, diram illam quidem tristissimamque, olim reddituræ est. Justa equidem arma nullus damno: illa non minùs necessaria sunt, quàm injusta sunt humano generi infesta. Etiam Michael et Angeli ejus pugnant; sed et titulus est ipsius Dei, *Dominus Exercituum: Sed, væ homini illi, quisquis demum fuerit, per quem scandalum hoc venit.* Juris alieni usurpatio, juramentorum contractuumque violatio, zelusque malè-sanus, rei sunt publicæ hujus internecionis. Privatorum hominum injuriæ la-

fearful comet did not more certainly portend these wars; than these wars presage the approach of the end of the world. The earth was never without some broils, since it was peopled but with three men; but so universal a combustion was never in the Christian world, since it was.

O Saviour, what can I think of this, but that, as thou wouldest have a general peace, upon thy first coming into the world; so, upon thy second coming, thou meanest there shall be a no less general war upon earth? That peace made way for thy meek appearance: this war, for thy dreadful and terrible.

chrymis facilè lavantur; principibus verò rerumque publicarum administratoribus illatæ, vix quidem sanguine diluuntur. Sine dubio, horrendus ille cometa non certiùs portendebat bella hæc, tam fera ac diuturna; quàm bella hæc mundi finem præsagiunt. Nunquam lite quâdam vacabat terra, ex quo tres tulit incolas; sed tam universales discordiarum flammæ, ex quo Christianus orbis extitit, nunquam profectò exarserunt.

O Servator, quid mihi aliud, ista seriò cogitanti, occurrit, nisi te, qui universalem pacem per orbem totum in priore adventu tuo, obtinere voluisti; statuisse etiam, ut, in secundo adventu tuo, bellum non minùs universale terram exerceret? Pax illa mitissimæ præsentiæ tuæ sternebat viam: bellum verò istud, formidandæ ac terribili.

XCVIII.

On a child crying.

Puero ejulante.

It was upon great reason, that the Apostle charges us, not to be children in Understanding. What fools we all once are! Even at first we cry and smile, we know not wherefore: we have not wit enough, to make signs, what hurts us, or where we complain: we can wry the mouth; but not seek the breast: and if we want help, we can only lament, and sprawl, and die. After, when some months have taught us, to distinguish a little betwixt things and persons, we cry for every toy, even that which may most hurt us; and, when there is no other cause, we cry only to hear our own noise; and are straight stilled, with a greater: and if it be but upon the breeding of a tooth, we are so wayward, that

Non sine justâ ratione, jubet Apostolus, ne quoad intelligentiam pueri simus. Quàm fatui semel sumus omnes! Lachrymamur primulùm ridemusque, quorsum verò utrumque facimus planè nescimus: non sat nobis ingenii suppetit, ut indicio aliquo innuamus, quid nos lædat, aut de quo conqueramur: os quidem detorquere possumus, hàc illàc; ubera verò quæritare parùm novimus: quòd si præstò fortè non sit adjutrix quæpiam, tantùm plorare, motitari, mori deinceps possumus. Postea verò, ubi menses aliquot nos docuerint forsan, inter res personasque aliquantulum distinguere, tricas quasque, etiam maximè nocivas, stridulo fletu prosequimur; et, ubi nulla subest causa alia, ejula-

nothing will please us; and if some formerly-liked knack be given to quiet us, we cast away that which we have, if we have not what we would seem to like. We fear neither fire, nor water: nothing scares us, but either a rod, or a feigned bug-bear. We misknow our parents: not acknowledging any friend, but the tailor, that brings us a fine coat; or the nurse, that dresses us gay. The more that our riper years resemble these dispositions, the more childish we are; and more worthy, both of our own and others' censure.

But again, it was upon no less reason, that the Apostle charges us, to be children in Maliciousness. Those little innocents bear no grudge: they are sooner pleased than angry: and if any man have wronged them, let them but have given a stroke unto the nurse, to beat the offender, it is enough; at the same instant, they put forth their hand for reconcilement, and offer themselves unto those arms that trespassed. And when they are most froward, they are stilled with a pleasant song. The old word is, that "An old man is twice a child;" but I say, happy is he, that is thus a child always. It is a great imperfection, to want knowledge; but, of the two, it is better to be a child in understanding, than a man in maliciousness.

mus modò ut nosmet ejulantes audiamus; et sono majore victi, conticescimus: quin et solo dentitionis dolore ita morosi sumus, ut nihil quicquam nos placare possit; quòd si qua priorum, quæ olim placuerunt, nauiarum, nobis sedandis porrigatur, abjicimus quæ habemus, si quæ cupimus habere parùm suppetant. Nec ignem metuimus, nec aquam: nihil nos terret, præter aut virgam, aut spectrum aliquod fictitium. Fallit nos parentum nostrorum notitia: nec quem agnoscimus amicum, præter sutorem vestiarium, qui novam adduxerit tunicam; aut nutricem, quæ nos ornaverit bellulè. Quo propiùs accedit ad dispositionem hanc maturior ætas nostra, eo magis pueriles sumus; nostrâque et aliorum censurâ digniores.

Rursum verò, non minore de causâ, præcipit Apostolus, ut, quoad malitiam, pueri simus. Parvuli isti verè innocentes nullâ secretâ laborant malevolentiâ: placantur ferè citiùs quàm irritantur: quòd si quis injuriam illis intulisse visus fuerit, ubi alapa nutrici porrigitur, quâ offendentem cædat, sedantur illico; eodemque momento, manum exerunt reconciliationis ergò, seque in provocantis brachia dedunt ultrò. Ubi autem vel morosissimi sunt, cantilenâ aliquâ suaviore ad priscam quietem reducuntur. Vetus verbum est, "Senem bis puerum esse;" fœlix verò est, inquam ego, qui sic semper puer manet. Magnæ imperfectionis est, scientiâ destitui; è duobus, tamen, minus malum est ut quis intelligentiâ puer sit, quàm vir malitiâ.

On the beginning of a sickness. XCIX. *Ineunte morbo.*

It was my own fault, if I looked not for this. All things must undergo their changes. I have enjoyed many fair days: there was no reason, I should not at last make account of clouds and storms. Could I have done well, without any mixtures of sin, I might have hoped for entire health; but, since I have interspersed my obedience with many sinful failings and enormities, why do I think much, to interchange health with sickness? What I now feel, I know: I am not worthy to know, what I must feel. As my times, so my measures, are in the hands of a wise and good God. My comfort is, he, that sends these evils, proportions them. If they be sharp, I am sure they are just: the most, that I am capable to endure, is the least part, of what I have deserved to suffer. Nature would fain be at ease; but, Lord, whatever become of this carcase, thou hast reason to have respect to thine own glory. I have sinned; and must smart. It is the glory of thy mercy, to beat my body, for the safety of my soul. The worst of sickness, is pain; and the worst of pain, is but death. As for pain, if it be extreme, it cannot be long; and if it be long, such is the difference of earthly and hellish torments, it cannot be extreme. As for death, it is both unavoidable, and beneficial: there ends my misery, and begins my glory: a few groans are well bestowed, for a preface to an immortal joy.

Meâ quidem unius culpâ fit, quòd ego istud non expectaverim. Omnia suas vicissitudines subeant necesse est. Multos ego serenos detrivi dies: non erat, quòd non aliquando nubes et turbines præsentirem. Si modò potuissem ego semper benè agere, absque omni peccati misturâ, perfectam fortè sanitatem meritò sperassem; sed, cùm obedientiam meam multis defectibus vitiosis enormibusque delictis intersperserim, cur mihi ægrè est, misceri morbum valetudini? Quid nunc sentiam, novi: quid deinceps perpessurus sim, non dignus sum qui sciam. Ut tempora mea, ita rerum mearum mensuræ, penes sapientissimum benignissimumque Deum sunt. Illud me solatur unicè, qui mihi immisit mala hæc, modum etiam iisdem malis præstituisse. Si gravia sint, scio esse justa: maximum eorum, quæ ego ferre possum, minimum est eorum, quæ perpeti meruerim. Quieti indulgere vellet natura; sed, O Deus, quicquid fiat de cadavere hoc meo, jure bono tu gloriam tuam respicis. Ego peccavi; necesse est vapulem. Miserecordiæ tuæ ingens gloria est, corpus meum verberare, ut animam serves. Pessimum morbi, dolor est; pessimum doloris, mors est. Dolorem quod spectat, si gravis is sit, diuturnus esse nequit; si diuturnus, illud nempe discriminis est inter terrenum hunc et infernum cruciatum, gravis esse non potest. Mortem verò quod attinet, et inevitabilis illa est, et haud parùm benefica: ibi desinit miseria mea, incipit gloria. Benè locantur pauci

Howsoever, O God, thy messenger is worthy to be welcome. *It is the Lord: let him do, whatsoever he will.*

gemitus, ubi præludio sunt immortalis gloriæ.

Quicquid sit, nuntius tuus, O Deus, dignus est qui summâ gratulatione excipiatur. *Dominus est ilicet: quid vult, faciat.*

On the challenge of a promise.

IT is true, an honest man's word must be his master. When I have promised, I am indebted; and debts may be claimed, must be paid. But yet, there is a great deal of difference, in our engagements: some things we promise, because they are due; some things are only due, because they are promised. These latter, which are but the mere engagements of courtesy, cannot so absolutely bind us, that, notwithstanding any intervention of unworthiness or misbehaviour in the person expectant, we are tied to make our word good, though to the cutting of our own throats. All favourable promises presuppose a capacity in the receiver: where that palpably faileth, common equity sets us free. I promised to send a fair sword to my friend: he is, since that time, turned frantic: must I send it; or be charged with unfaithfulness, if I send it not?

O God, thy title is *The God of Truth.* Thou canst no more cease to be faithful, than to be. How oft hast thou promised, that no good thing shall be wanting to thine; and yet we know, thy dearest children have complained of want! Is thy word therefore challengeable? Far, far be this wicked presumption from our

C. *Promisso quodam vehementiùs postulato.*

VERUM est illud quidem, honestum quemque verbi sui semel emissi servum esse. Ubi promiserim, debitor sum; debita autem, et postulari possunt, et solvi necesse habent. Multum tamen est, in obligationum nostrarum generibus, discrimen: quædam pollicemur, quòd debita sint; quædam verò, eo solo nomine debentur, quòd ultrò promiserimus. Posteriora hæc, quæ mera sunt favoris et beneficentiæ spontaneæ vincula, nos absolutè quidem ita ligare, ut, quicquid interveniat in expectante mali, necessariò teneamur, quanquam maximo cum nostro incommodo, præstare promissum, planè nequeunt. Pollicita quæque gratuita capacitatem quandam in recipiente semper præsupponunt: quâ demptâ, ipsa nos communis æquitas liberat et absolvit. Gladium quendam accuratè sculptum amico cuidam meo promiseram: is, interea temporis, in phrenesin incidit: quid? nunquid hunc aut mittere teneor; aut statim arguor violatæ fidei, qui non miserim?

O Deus, meritò quidem audis tu *Deus Veritatis.* Neque minùs impossibile est ut tu fidelis non sis, quàm ut esse desinas. Quoties pollicitus es tu, nihil quicquam boni tuis defuturum; quoties tamen audivimus, filios tuos charissimos fame et inediâ laborâsse! Quid? vacillatnè ergo verbum tuum, nostrisque cavillis

thoughts. No: these, thy promises of outward favours, are never but with a subintelligence of a condition of our capableness, of our expedience. Thou seest, that plenty, or ease, would be our bane: thy love forbears to satisfy us, with a harmful blessing. We are worthy to be plagued with prejudicial kindnesses, if we do not acknowledge thy wisdom and care in our want. It is enough for us, that thy best mercies are our dues, because thy promises: we cannot too much claim that, which thou hast absolutely engaged thyself to give; and, in giving, shalt make us eternally happy.

obnoxium erit? Absit, absit, ut cogitationes nobis occurrant ita audacter impiæ. Minimè verò: quæ gratiam externam spectant promissa, nunquam non cum certâ quâdam conditionis sive capacitatis nostræ, sive expedientiæ subintelligentiâ, proponuntur. Vides tu scilicet, rerum omnium affluentiam, quietemque, exitio nobis fore: amor tuus noxio nos beneficio cumulare detrectat. Digni sumus qui infestis perniciosisque favoribus puniamur, si prudentiam tuam curamque eximiam in nostrâ hâc indigentiâ grato animo non agnoscamus. Sufficit nobis abundè, miserationum tuarum optimas quasque debitas nobis esse, quia à te promissas: non possumus nimis confidenter poscere, quod tu certissimè largiri promiseris; largiendoque, nos æternùm beatos præstiturus es.

On the sight of flies.

CI. *Muscis quibusdam conspectis.*

When I look upon these flies, and gnats, and worms, I have reason to think, what am I to my Infinite Creator, more than these? And, if these had my reason, why might they not expostulate with their Maker, why they are but such; why they live to so little purpose, and die without either notice or use? And, if I had no more reason than they, I should be, as they, content with any condition. That reason, which I have, is not of my own giving: he, that hath given me reason, might as well have given it to them; or have made me, as reasonless, as they. There is no cause, why his greater gift should make me mutinous and

Quoties muscas istas, culices, ac vermiculos intuero, est sanè quòd cogitem, Quid sum ego Infinito Creatori meo, plus quàm isti? Quòd, si hi rationis meæ participes essent, quidni conditorem suum compellarent, cur tales facti sint; cur tam inutiles vivant, tantoque cum neglectu moriantur? Et, si mihi æquè ac illis deesset ratio, sorte ego quâvis, quemadmodum et illi, sat benè contentus forem. Ratio, quâ præditus sum, non à meipso profluit: illam qui mihi solus indidit, potuit et istis non minùs dedisse; meve, si visum fuisset, non minùs quam istos, rationis expertem condidisse. Non est, quòd me morosum ingratumque reddat major illius benignitas.

malecontent. I will thank my God, for what I am, for what I have; and never quarrel with him, for what I want.

Quicquid sim, quicquid habeam, Deo meo acceptum referam; quicquid defuerit, absit ut cum ipso expostulem.

On the sight of a fantastical zealot. CII. *Viso zelote quodam fanatico.*

It is not the intent of grace, to mould our bodies anew; but to make use of them, as it finds us. The disposition of men much follows the temper of their bodily humours. This mixture of humours, wrought upon by grace, causeth that strange variety, which we see in professions pretendedly religious. When grace lights upon a sad, melancholic spirit; nothing is affected, but sullenness, and extreme mortification, and dislike even of lawful freedom; nothing, but positions and practices of severe austerity: when, contrarily, upon the cheerful and lively, all draws towards liberty and joy; those thoughts do now please best, which enlarge the heart to mirth and contentation. It is the greatest improvement of Christian wisdom, to distinguish, in all professions, betwixt grace and humour; to give God his own glory, and men their own infirmities.

Corpora nostra de novo formare, gratiæ propositum non est; sed iis uti potiùs, prout disposita invenerit. Ingenia moresque hominum sequuntur, ut plurimùm, humorum in corpore qualemcunque temperiem. Ista humorum mixtio, gratiâ insuper operante, efficit stupendam illam varietatem, quæ in religiosâ quâque professione elucet. Cùm in animum tristem, mæstumque, gratia inciderit; nihil heic affectatur, nisi morositas quædam, et singularis vitæ austeritas, licitæque et probatæ libertatis tetrica repudiatio; nihil denique, præter durissimæ severitatis et theses et praxin assiduam: cùm verò, è contrà, hilarem ac jucundum beârit gratia, ad libertatem lætitiamque tendunt omnia; eæ cogitationes nunc maximè arrident, quibus ad lepores et festivitatem quandam cor dilatari possit. Maximum arguit in sapientiâ Christianâ profectum, posse inter simplicem gratiam et nativum cujusque ingenium, quæcunque demum professio sit, discrimen statuere; debitam Deo gloriam tribuere, propriasque hominibus infirmitates.

On the sight of a scavenger working in the kennel. CIII. *Conspecto sordido quodam canalium expurgatore.*

The wise providence of God hath fitted men with spirits answerable to their condition. If mean men should bear the minds of great

Hominum animos accommodavit infinita Dei providentia ipsorum conditionibus quibuscumque. Si plebeii magnatum animos gere-

lords, no servile works would be done: all would be commanders; and none could live. If, contrarily, great persons had the low spirits of drudges, there could be no order, no obedience; because there should be none to command. Now, out of this discord of dispositions, God hath contrived an excellent harmony of government and peace: since, the use, which each sort must needs have of other, binds them to maintain the quality of their own ranks: and to do those offices, which are requisite for the preservation of themselves and the public. As inferiors then, must bless God, for the graces and authority of their betters; so must superiors no less bless him, for the humility and serviceableness of the meaner; and those, which are of the mid rank, must bless him for both.

rent, de servilibus quibusque officiis actum penitùs esset: omnes nempe imperare vellent; vivere posset nemo. Et, si magnatibus inesset sordidum mancipiorum ingenium, actum itidem esset de ordine et obsequio; quia nemo sic quidem imperitare noverit. Nunc verò, ex hâc morum discordiâ, eruit ordinavitque Deus optimam regiminis et pacis harmoniam: eò nimirum, quòd necessarius utriusque sortis in se invicem nexus, cogat unumquemque, proprium, in quo positus est, ordinem usque sustinere; eaque præstare officia, quæ ad sui reique publicæ tutelam maximè expedierint. Ut itaque inferiorum est, Deo benedicere, ob superiorum merita et potestatem; ita neque minùs superioribus incumbit, ob inferiorum humilitatem et observantiam, gratias ipsi habere maximas; quique mediæ conditionis sunt, pares, utrorumque nomine, referre oportet.

CIV.

On a pair of spectacles.

I LOOK upon these, not as objects, but as helps: as not meaning, that my sight should rest in them, but pass through them; and, by their aid, discern some other things which I desire to see.

Many such glasses my soul hath, and useth. I look through the glass of the Creatures, at the power and wisdom of their Maker: I look through the glass of the Scriptures, at the great mystery of redemption, and the glory of a heavenly inheritance: I look through God's Favours, at his infinite mercy; through his Judgments, at his incomprehensible justice. But, as these spectacles of mine presuppose a fa-

De perspecillis suis.

ISTA ego intueor, non ut objecta, sed ut adjumenta: neque, ut in ipsis visio mea terminetur, sed per ista transeat; eorumque adminiculo, alia quædam visu digna clariùs conspicetur.

Multa hujusmodi specula habet anima, usurpatque. Per Creaturarum speculum, ad potentiam ac sapientiam Creatoris fertur oculus: per Scripturas, ad magnum redemptionis mysterium, cœlestisque hæreditatis gloriam: per Dei Beneficia, ad immensam ipsius miserecordiam; per Judicia, ad justitiam ejusdem incomprehensibilem. Verùm, ut mea hæc perspecilla facultatem in oculo supponunt, nec mihi cæ-

culty in the eye, and cannot give me sight when I want it, but only clear that sight which I have; no more can these glasses of the Creatures, of Scriptures, of Favours, and Judgments, enable me to apprehend those blessed objects, except I have an eye of faith, whereto they may be presented. These helps to an unbelieving man, are but as spectacles to the blind. As the natural eyes, so the spiritual, have their degrees of dimness. But I have ill improved my age, if, as my natural eyes decay, my spiritual eye be not cleared and confirmed: but, at my best, I shall never but need spectacles, till I come to *see, as I am seen.*

co possunt visum impertire, sed lippienti tantùm clariorem reddere; ita, neque possunt ista Creaturarum, Scripturarum, Beneficiorum, Judiciorumve specula, potestatem mihi indere beatifica illa objecta quovismodo apprehendendi, nisi et oculum fidei habuero, cui ista demum præsententur. Certè hæc qualiacunque auxilia infideli, pariter se habent ac cæco perspecilla. Ut naturales oculi, sic etiam et spirituales, suos habent caliginis gradus. Pessimè autem de ætate meâ merui, si, dum defecerint paulatim naturales isti ocelli, altera illa spiritualis acies non et perspicacior indies et firmior evaserit: etsi, ubi me vel optimè habuero, nunquam non perspecillis mihi opus erit, donec tandem *videro, uti videor ipse.*

On motes in the sun. CV. *Visis atomis in solis radiis.*

How these little motes move up and down in the sun, and never rest; whereas the great mountains stand ever still, and move not, but with an earthquake!

Even so light and busy spirits are in continual agitation, to little purpose; while great deep wits sit still, and stir not but upon extreme occasions. Were the motion of these little atoms as useful as it is restless, I would rather be a mote than a mountain.

Quàm inquieto cursu atomi istæ minutulæ, sursum deorsum, in radiis solaribus motitantur; dum fixi interim hærent montes, nec unquam, nisi motâ terrâ ipsâ, moveri solent!

Sic levia ac operosa ingenia nunquam non agitantur, multo cum laboris dispendio, fructu penè nullo; dum solida et profunda delitescunt, nec, nisi necessitate quâdam impellente, prodeunt. Esset modò atomorum motus iste utilis æquè ac inquietus, atomus ego quàm mons esse malim.

On the sight of a bladder. CVI. *Conspectâ vesicâ recente.*

Every thing must be taken in his meet time: let this bladder alone till it be dry, and all the wind in the world cannot raise it

Suum unicuique rei tempus oportunum est: vesica ista, ubi semel peraruerit, nullo quantovis flatu distenditur; recens jam et

up; whereas now it is new and moist, the least breath fills, and enlarges it.

It is no otherwise in ages and dispositions. Inform the child in precepts of learning and virtue, while years make him capable; how pliably he yieldeth! how happily is he replenished with knowledge and goodness! Let him alone, till time and ill example have hardened him; till he be settled in a habit of evil, and contracted and clung together with sensual delights; now he becomes utterly indocible. Sooner may that bladder be broken, than distended.

humida, intumescit illico tota, halituque vel lenissimo dilatatur.

Neque aliter se habet cum hominum indole ac ætate. Si puerum adhuc tenellum literarum virtutisque præceptis institueris, mirum quàm facilem se geret! quàm suaviter eruditionem ac pietatem omnem imbibit! Sine illum modò, donec longiore tempore pravoque exemplo indurueris; donec malis se habitibus obfirmaverit, et vitiosis cupiditatibus contractus quasi compressusque fuerit; nunc indocilis fit penitissimè. Citiùs jam vesica ista rumpi sanè, quam distendi poterit.

CVII.

On a man sleeping. *Viso quodam dormiente.*

I DO not more wonder at any man's art, than at his, who professes to think of nothing, to do nothing: and I do not a little marvel at that man, who says he can sleep without a dream. For, the mind of man is a restless thing: and, though it give the body leave to repose itself, as knowing it is a mortal and earthly piece; yet itself, being a spirit, and therefore active and indefatigable, is ever in motion. Give me a sea, that moves not; a sun, that shines not; an open eye, that sees not: and I shall yield there may be a reasonable soul, that works not. It is possible, that, through a natural or accidental stupidity, a man may not perceive his own thoughts; as sometimes the eye or ear may be distracted not to discern his own objects; but, in the mean time, he thinks that, whereof he cannot give an account: like as we many times dream, when we

NULLIUS ego artem miror magis, quàm illius, qui nihil cogitare profitetur, nihilque agere: sed et illius, qui se absque ullo insomnio dormire posse ait. Siquidem, irrequieta res est animus humanus: qui, licet corpori det veniam, mortali quidem illi ac terrenæ moli, ut quieti indulgeat; ipse tamen, spiritualis cùm sit, eoque nomine activus et indefessus, continuo motu agitatur. Da mihi mare, tranquillum undique et immotum; solem, qui non luceat; oculum apertum, qui nihil tamen videat: ego concedam identidem animam rationalem esse posse otiosam. Possibile quidem est homini, ex naturali sive accidentariâ forsan stupiditate, cogitationes suas proprias non sentire; uti et adeò distrahi aliquando contingat oculum auremve, ut proprium sibi objectum neuter percipiat; interea tamen, illud vel hic cogitat, cujus fortasse rationem reddere non potest:

cannot report our fancy. I should more easily put myself to school unto that man, who undertakes the profession of thinking many things at once. Instantany motions are more proper for a spirit, than a dull rest. Since my mind will needs be ever working, it shall be my care, that it may always be well employed.

quemadmodum sæpiùs ita elabuntur nobis insomnia, ut phantasmata nostra postea repetere et revocare nequeamus. Illi ego me potiùs in disciplinam tradiderim, qui plura simul cogitandi artem profitetur. Motus instantanei spiritibus magis conveniunt, quàm plumbea quædam quies ac pigritia. Cùm anima mea nunquam non agere aliquid gestiat, curæ mihi erit, ut semper benè agendo occupetur.

On the sight of a death's-head. CVIII. *Viso cranio humano.*

I WONDER at the practice of the ancient both Greeks and Romans, whose use was, to bring up a death's-head, in the midst of their feasts; on purpose, to stir up their guests to drink harder, and to frolic more: the sight whereof, one would think, should have rather abated their courage; and have tempered their jollity.

But however it was with them, who believed there was nothing after death; that the consideration of the short time of their pleasures and being, spurred them on to a free and full fruition of that mirth and excess, which they should not long live to enjoy: yet to us, that are Christians; and therefore, know that this short life doth but make way for an eternity of joy or torment afterwards, and that after the feast we must account of a reckoning; there cannot be a greater cooler for the heat of our intemperate desires and rage of our appetites, than the meditation of the shortness of life and the certainty of death. Who would over-pamper a body, for

MIROR ego antiquorum cùm Græcorum tùm Romanorum morem, quibus solenne erat, mĕdia inter epula, mortui cranium convivis apponere; eo quidem fine, ut discumbentes liberiùs genio indulgerent, et ad pocula hilaritatemque solutiores ferrentur: quod quidem spectaculum, ut mihi videtur, terrorem potiùs incutere; et, si quod aliud, luxuriantibus frænum injicere potuisset.

Verùm, quicquid illi demum fecerint, qui nihil amplius post mortem superesse crediderunt; ideoque breve cogitantes ævum et voluptatum et vitæ suæ, incitârunt se, eo quidem acriùs, ad liberiorem libidinis suæ usum prosecutionemque, quò minùs diutulè illâ frui liceret: nobis certè, qui Christiani sumus; eoque nomine, haud ignari vitam hanc breviculam ad futuram gaudii vel pœnarum æternitatem viam sternere, sed et sumptuum quoque rationem à nobis post epulas tandem exposcendam; nihil est quod libidinis æstum magis temperare possit impetumve appetituum cohibere, quàm ut de vitæ fragilitate mortisque certitudine seriò semper meditemur. Ecquis ven-

the worms? Who would be so mad, as to let himself loose to that momentary pleasure of sin, which ere long must cost him everlasting pain and misery? For me, methinks this head speaks no other language, than this: "Lose no time: thou art dying: do thy best: thou mayest do good but a while; and shalt fare well for ever."

trem saginare vellet, ut vermibus epulum instruat? Ecquis ita desiperet, ut momentaneis peccati blandimentis, eâ quidem lege, ut pœnas in æternum duraturas deinceps luat, se totum addiceret? Me quod spectat, videor mihi audire cranium hoc, haud aliter quàm sic me allocutum: "Ne quid temporis prodigas: et tu moriturus es: optimis quibusque operam impendas: non licebit diu benefacere; sic age, ut benè valeas æternùm."

On the sight of a left-handed man. CIX. *Ad conspectum scævæ cujusdam.*

It is both an old and easy observation, that, however the senses are alike strong and active on the right side and on the left; yet that the limbs on the right side are stronger than those of the left, because they are more exercised than the other: upon which self-same reason it must follow, that a left-handed man hath more strength in his left arm than in his right.

Neither is it otherwise in the soul. Our intellectual parts grow vigorous with employment; and languish with disuse. I have known excellent preachers and pregnant disputants, that have lost these faculties with lack of action; and others, but meanly qualified with natural gifts, that have attained to a laudable measure of abilities by improvement of their little. I would rather lack good parts, than that good parts should lack me. Not to have great gifts, is no fault of mine: it is my fault, not to use them.

Vetus est facilisque observatio illa, utut sensus dexteriores sinisterioresque æquè activi vegetique sint; membra tamen dextrorsum posita sinistris aliquantò esse fortiora, quia scilicet sæpiùs magisque exercentur: unde etiam sequitur, quòd cui manus sinistra magis in usu est, eidem et brachium sinistrum dextro dexterius validiusque sit.

Neque aliter in animâ se habet. Facultates nostræ intellectuales exercitio plùs roborantur; otio verò languescunt. Novi ipse concionatores egregios disputatoresque acutissimos, qui tamen utrique hoc, quicquid erat artis, desuetudine paulatim perdiderunt; alios verò, indole quidem mediocres, qui frequenti exercitio ita demum auxerint, ut non contemnendum utriusque facultatis modum fuerint assecuti. Malo mihi desint egregiæ animi dotes, quàm ut ego illis desim. Carere istis, mihi vitio non erit: vitio certè est, non benè uti.

On the sight of an old, unthatched cottage.

CX. *Conspecto tuguriolo pauperculo vetere, nudato tegmine stramineo caducoque.*

THERE cannot be a truer emblem of crazy old age: mouldered and clay walls; a thin, uncovered roof; bending studs; dark and broken windows; in short, a house ready to fall on the head of the indweller.

The best body is but a cottage: if newer and better timbered, yet such as age will equally impair, and make thus ragged and ruinous; or, before that, perhaps casualty of fire, or tempest, or violence of an enemy. One of the chief cares of men is, to dwell well. Some build for themselves; fair, but not strong: others build for posterity; strong, but not fair, not high: but happy is that man, that builds for eternity; as strong, as fair, as high as the glorious contignations of heaven.

INFIRMÆ senectutis aptius emblema cogitari non potest: ecce enim parietes lutosi, jamque modò in pulverem abituri; tectum rarius, detectumque; recurvata statumina; obscuræ fractæque fenestræ; domus, denique, tota in domini sui caput illico ruitura.

Corpus vel validissimum casa vilis est tenuisque: si recentiore et meliore ligno constructa, qualem tamen tempus æquè facilè corrumpet, istâque non minùs sordidam ac laciniosam relinquet; et, quæ forsan incendio, tempestatibus, hostiumque violentâ impetitione citiùs corruet. Hoc sibi imprimis curandum homines proponere solent, ut benè habitent. Alii quidem sibimet ædificant; splendidè fortè satis, at parùm solidè stabiliterque: alii posteris; firmiter satis, at non altè, nitidèque: fœlicem verò illum, qui ædificat æternitati; firmitudine, splendore, ac sublimitate nihil infra cœli supremi contignationem æmulatus.

On the sight of a fair pearl.

CXI. *Conspectâ quâdam gemmâ lucentâ.*

WHAT a pure and precious creature is this; which yet is taken out of the mud of the sea! Who can complain of a base original, when he sees such excellencies so descended? These shell-fishes, that have no sexes, and therefore are made out of corruption, what glorious things they yield, to adorn and make proud the greatest princesses!

God's great works go not by likelihoods. How easily can he

Quàm puri verèque preciosi sunt uniones isti; ex imâ tamen maris fæce deprompti! Ecquis vel vilissimâ se natum origine conqueritur, qui eximias hasce naturæ delicias sic conspicatur oriundas? Conchylia hæc, quæ sexu carent, atque ideo ex merâ putredine ortum deducunt, quàm gloriosas edunt gemmas, quibus et ornare se solent et superbire maximæ orbis dominæ!

Non externâ quâdam specie, ac eventûs probabilitate æstiman-

fetch glory out of obscurity, who brought all out of nothing!

da sunt, magna Dei opificia. Qui omnia è nihilo eduxit, quàm facili negotio eruit ex obscuritate gloriam!

On a screen. CXII. *Visâ quâdam antepyrâ.*

METHINKS this screen, that stands betwixt me and the fire, is like some good friend at the court; which keeps me from the heat of the unjust displeasure of the great, wherewith I might perhaps otherwise be causelessly scorched.

But how happy am I, if the interposition of my Saviour, my best Friend in Heaven, may screen me from the deserved wrath of that great God, *who is a consuming fire.*

Quàm similis mihi videtur antepyra hæc, inter me et ignem tam commodè interjecta, fido cuidam patrono aulico; cujus intercessio me ab ardore injustæ potentum iræ, quo immeritò forsan, absque hoc foret, mihi torreri contingat, tutò servat protegitque.

Quòd si interpositio benignissimi Servatoris mei, Unici mihi in cœlis Patroni, tueri me velit à meritissimâ excandescentiâ magni illius Dei, *qui ignis consumens est,* quàm ego verè beatus fuero!

On a bur-leaf. CXIII. *Viso petasite, vel bardanæ quam vocant, folio largiore.*

NEITHER the vine, nor the oak, nor the cedar, nor any tree that I know within our climate, yields so great a leaf, as this weed; which yet, after all expectation, brings forth nothing but a bur, unprofitable, troublesome.

So have I seen none make greater profession of religion, than an ignorant man; whose indiscreet forwardness yields no fruit, but a factious disturbance to the Church, wherein he lives. Too much shew is not so much better than none at all, as an ill fruit is worse than none at all.

NEQUE vitis, nec quercus, nec cedrus, nec quæ alia quam novi arbor in totâ hac mundi plagâ, æquè amplum edit folium, ac herbula hæc; quæ tamen, post satis longam expectationem, nihil quicquam profert præter lappam, inutilem, molestamque.

Ita neminem omnium plus religiosæ professionis ostentare vidi, quàm hominem ignarum; cujus malèfervidum ingenium nihil fructus edit, præter seditiosam quandam Ecclesiæ, in quâ degit, perturbationem. Nimia boni species non tanto melior est omnino nullam, quanto fructus malus est nullo deterior.

On the singing of a bird. CXIV. *Audito aviculæ cantu.*

IT is probable, that none of those creatures that want reason, delight so much in pleasant sounds

NIMIO quàm probabile est, inter animalia omnia, rationis expertia, aves sonorum dulcedine max-

as a bird: whence it is, that both it spends so much time in singing, and is more apt to imitate those modulations which it hears from men.

Frequent practice, if it be voluntary, argues a delight in that which we do; and delight makes us more apt to practise, and more capable of perfection in that we practise.

O God, if I take pleasure in thy Law, I shall meditate of it with comfort, speak of it with boldness, and practise it with cheerfulness.

imè delectari: quo fit, ut et istæ tantum temporis cantando deterant, et imitandis hominum modulationibus haud parùm sint aptiores.

Actionum frequentia, modò voluntaria fuerit, arguit voluptatem quandam complacentiamque in iis quæ facimus; voluptas verò illa nos reddit et agendi peritiores, et magis capaces perfectionis cujusdam in iis quibus jugiter exercemur.

O Deus, si in Lege tuâ delectationem meam omnem locavero, hanc unam meditabor alacer, audax eloquar, præstabo sedulus fœlixque.

CXV.

On the sight of a man yawning.

IT is a marvellous thing, to see the real effects and strong operation of consent or sympathy, even where there is no bodily touch. So, one sad man puts the whole company into dumps: so, one man's yawning affects and stretches the jaws of many beholders: so, the looking upon blear eyes taints the eye with blearness.

From hence it is easy to see the ground of our Saviour's expostulation with his persecutor, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* The Church is persecuted below: he feels it above; and complains. So much as the person is more apprehensive, must he needs be more affected.

O Saviour, thou canst not but be deeply sensible of all our miseries and necessities: if we do not feel thy wrongs, and the

Conspecto quodam oscitante.

SI quis realem effectum fortemque operationem sympathiæ, etiam ubi nullus intercedit contactus corporeus, sedulò observaverit, haud parùm sanè mirabitur. Ita, unius mœstitia totum conventum tristitiâ quâdam afficit: ita, unius oscitatio aperit distenditque plurimorum aspectantium fauces: ita, lipporum intuitus oculum inficit pari lippitudine.

Facilè hinc videmus, quâ fretus ratione, Servator noster cum insectatore suo tam vehementer expostulaverit, *Saule, Saule, quid me persequeris?* Ecclesia patitur in terrâ: is sentit in cœlo; quiritaturque. Quanto magis persona sensu valet et apprehensione, tanto acriùs afficiatur necesse est.

Non potes tu, O Servator Benignissime, non exquisitissimè sentire miserias infirmitatesque nostras: ni nos itidem illatas tibi

wants of our brethren, we have no part in thee.

injurias, fratrumque nostrorum necessitates senserimus, nihil sanè nobis tecum fuerit commercii.

On the sight of a tree lopped. CXVI. *Visâ arbore quâdam resectâ.*

In the lopping of these trees, experience, and good husbandry, hath taught men, to leave one bough still growing in the top; the better to draw up the sap from the root.

The like wisdom is fit to be observed in censures; which are intended altogether for reformation, not for destruction. So must they be inflicted, that the patient be not utterly discouraged, and stript of hope and comfort: but that, while he suffereth, he may feel his good tendered; and his amendment both aimed at, and expected.

O God, if thou shouldest deal with me as I deserve, thou shouldest not only shred my boughs, but cut down my stock, and stock up my root; and yet thou dost but prune my superfluous branches, and cherishest the rest. How unworthy am I of this mercy; if, while thou art thus indulgent unto me, I be severe and cruel to others, perhaps less ill-deserving than myself!

In frondatione hâc, experientia, reique rusticæ peritia, homines edocuit, ramum saltem unum in arboris summitate relinquere; quo succus ab imâ radice attrahatur retineaturque.

Eadem planè prudentia in censuris observanda est; iis nimirum quæ corrigendis moribus, non personis destruendis inserviunt. Ita nempe infligendæ sunt illæ, ut non animum prorsùs despondeat reus, speque omni ac solatio destituatur: sed ut sentiat quas patitur pœnas, ad animæ suæ bonum intendi universas; reformationemque suam et unicè propositam agnoscat, et exinde expectatam.

O Deus, si sic mecum agere velles ac ipse merui, non solùm ramos mihi omnes resecares, sed stirpem etiam ipsum rescinderes, penitùsve eradicares; tu verò superfluos mihi quosdam ramusculos amputare miserecors voluisti, stolones reliquos fovere. Quàm indignus fuero ego hâc gratiâ; si, dum tua sic mihi favet indulgentia, ipse aliis, minùs fortasse malè meritis, severum me crudelemque præstitero!

On a scholar that offered violence to himself. CXVII. *De studioso quodam qui vim sibi intulerat.*

Had this man lain long under some eminent discontentment, it had been easy to find out the motive of his miscarriage. Weak nature is easily over-laid with im-

Si gravi aliquâ insignique ægritudine laborâsset iste, tanti hujusce mali causam adinvenire haud difficile fuisset. Imbellis natura hæc facilè quidem obrui-

patience: it must be only the power of grace, that can grapple with vehement evils, and master them. But here, the world cannot say, what could be guilty of occasioning this violence. This man's hand was full; his fame untainted; his body no burden; his disposition, for ought we saw, fair; his life guiltless: yet something did the Tempter find, to aggravate unto his feeble thoughts, and to represent worthy of a dispatch.

What a poor thing is life, whereof so slight occasions can make us weary! What impotent wretches are we, when we are not sustained! One would think this the most impossible of all motions. Naturally, every man loves himself: and life is sweet; death abhorred. What is it, that Satan can despair to persuade men unto, if he can draw them, to an unnatural abandoning of life, and pursuit of death? Why should I doubt of prevailing with my own heart, by the powerful over-ruling of God's Spirit, to contemn life and to affect death, for the sake of my Saviour, in exchange of a few miserable moments for eternity of joy: when I see men, upon an unreasonable suggestion of that Evil Spirit, cast away their lives for nothing; and so hastening their temporal death, that they hazard an eternal?

tur impatientiâ: unica sit oportet vis divinæ gratiæ, quæ cum maximis malis confligere possit, deque illis denique devictis triumphare. Istic verò, nemo omnium suspicari potest, quid tandem fuerit quod hominem hunc ad tam immanem αὐθεντόνιαν impulerit. Supellex illi non curta fuit; fama illæsa; sat sanum corpus; animi verò dispositio, quantum quidem nobis apparuit, candida ac serena; vita denique inculpata: aliquid tamen invenit Tentator, quod suggereret impotenti huic animæ, tantâ violentiâ non indignum.

Quàm misella res est vita nostra, cujus nos ita facilè tædeat! Quàm nos mera sumus debilitas, ni à supremâ illâ manu sustentemur! Ex omnibus illis tentationibus, quæ mentem humanam invadere solent, quis non autumaret hanc maximè impossibilem; "Occide te?" Diligit se nempe quisque, naturæ instinctu: vita suavis est; mors infesta. Quid est, quod non speret Diabolus persuadere hominibus, cùm inducere ipsos possit, ut vitam abdicare, mortem ambire malint? Aut quid desperem ego tantum apud me valere, ut aliquando possim, potenti Spiritûs Divini efficaciâ, vitam contemnere, causâque Servatoris mei, oppetere mortem illam, in quâ pauca quædam pœnarum momenta cum æternitate gaudii commutantur: cùm alios quosdam videam, quantumlibet improbabiliter suggerente Satanâ, gratis prodigere animam; atque ita temporalem sibi mortem accelerantes, ut æternæ periculum interea incurrere non dubitent?

On the coming in of the judge. CXVIII. *De judicis adventu.*

THE construction of men and their actions, is altogether according to the disposition of the lookers on. The same face of the Judge, without any inward alteration, is seen, with terror by the guilty, with joy and confidence by the oppressed innocent: like as the same lips of the Bridegroom drop both myrrh and honey at once; honey to the well-disposed heart, myrrh to the rebellious: and the same cup relishes well to the healthful, and distates the feverous: the same word is, though a sweet, yet a contrary, savour to the different receivers: and the same sun comforts the strong sight, dazzles the weak.

For a man to affect, either to do or speak that which may be pleasing to all men, is but a weak and idle ambition; when we see him, that is infinitely good, appear terrible to more than he appears lovely. Goodness is itself, with whatever eyes it is looked upon. There can be no safety for that man, that regards more the censure of men, than the truth of being. He, that seeks to win all hearts, hath lost his own.

PROUT afficiuntur spectatorum animi, sic planè homines humanæque actiones construi solent. Eadem facies Judicis, absque ullâ sui mutatione, à reis non sine terrore quodam, non sine gaudio fiduciâque ab insontibus oppressis, conspicitur: eadem Sponsi labia et mel simul et myrrham distillant; benè quidem dispositis animis mel dulcissimum, myrrham verò rebellibus præfractisque: uti et poculum idem optimè sapit sano, febricitanti displicet: verbum idem, his ὀσμὴ θανάτου, illis ζωῆς; εὐωδία tamen Christi utrobique: idem solis radius fortem oculi aciem refocillat, perstringit debilem.

Id sibi demum ut quisquam hominum proponat, sive facere sive loqui quod omnibus perplaceat, impotentis cujusdam et otiosæ ambitionis est; quandoquidem videmus illum, qui infinitè bonus est, terribilem longè pluribus quàm amabilem apparere. Non est aliud à se bonitas, quibuscunque tandem oculis conspiciatur. Tutus profectò esse nusquam potest, qui pluris facit hominum censuram, quàm conditionis suæ veritatem ac justitiam. Qui omnium corda ambitiosè captat, suum perdidit.

On the sight of a heap of stones. CXIX. *Conspecto lapidum acervo.*

UNDER such a pile it was, that the first martyr was buried: none of all the ancient kings had so glorious a tomb: there were many stones, and every one precious. Jacob leaned his head upon a stone, and saw that heavenly vision of angels ascending and

SUB tali acervo, sepultus est primus martyrum: nullus antiquorum regum sortitus est tumulum æquè gloriosum: multi istìc lapides erant, et pretiosi omnes. Jacob olim caput suum in lapidem reclinavit, viditque cœleste illud spectaculum, ascendentium des-

descending: many stones light upon Stephen's head, in the instant, of his seeing the heavens opened, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. Lo, Jacob, resting upon that one stone, saw but the angels: Stephen, being to rest for once under those many stones, saw the Lord of the Angels. Jacob saw the Angels moving: Stephen saw Jesus standing. As Jacob therefore afterwards, according to his vow, made there an altar to God; so Stephen now in the present gathers these stones together, of which he erected a holy altar, whereon he offered up himself a blessed sacrifice unto God. And, if there be *a time of gathering stones, and a time of casting them away;* this was the time, wherein the Jews cast, and Stephen gathered up these stones for a monument of eternal glory. O blessed Saint, thou didst not so clearly see heaven opened, as heaven saw thee covered: thou didst not so perfectly see thy Jesus standing, as he saw thee lying patiently, courageously under that fatal heap. Do I mistake it? or are those stones, not flints and pebbles; but diamonds, and rubies, and carbuncles to set upon thy crown of glory?

cendentiumque angelorum: in caput Stephani congesti sunt lapides multi, eodem planè momento, quo cœlum vidit apertum, Jesumque ad dextram Patris consistentem. Ecce, Jacob, uni illi recumbens lapidi, angelos tantùm vidit: Stephanus verò, sub lapidibus multis illico se repositurus, angelorum Dominum conspexit. Jacob vidit angelos sùsque déque moventes: Jesum stantem conspexit Stephanus. Ut ergo Jacob, juxta quod voverat, altare illic erexit Deo postmodùm; ita et Stephanus modò congerit lapides istos, è quibus sanctum altare struit, ipse in gratissimam Deo victimam immolandus. Et, si *tempus uspiam sit colligendi lapides, et tempus item dispergendi;* certè, hoc ipsissimum tempus erat, quo et dispergebant Judæi, et colligebat Stephanus lapides istos, æternæ tanti martyris gloriæ futures monumento. Non ita clarè videras tu, ô Beatissime, cœlum tibi apertum, ac cœlum te coopertum conspicabatur: non ita liquidò vidisti tu Jesum tuum in cœlo stantem, ac ille te sub fatali hoc cumulo patienter, fortiterque jacentem conspexit. Fallor? aut lapides illi non fuerunt siliciæ, calculive, aut quod aliud vile genus; sed adamantes, pyropive, aut siqui alii preciosiores, coronæ illi gloriæ, quâ cingereris, immortalis decorandæ.

On the sight of a bat and owl.

CXX.

De bubone et vespertilione.

THESE night-birds are glad to hide their heads all the day: and if, by some violence, they be unseasonably forced out of their secrecy, how are they followed

ISTÆ noctis alumnæ toto die latitare gestiunt: et si, casu quodam aut insperatâ vi, è latebris suis intempestivè propellantur, quàm insectanter illico excipi-

and beaten by the birds of the day!

With us men it is contrary. The sons of darkness do, with all eagerness of malice, pursue the children of the light, and drive them into corners, and make a prey of them: the opposition is alike; but the advantage lies on the worse side. Is it, for that the spiritual light is no less hateful to those children of darkness, than the natural night is to those cheerful birds of the day? or is it, for that the sons of darkness, challenging no less propriety in the world than the fowl do in the lightsome air, abhor and wonder at the conscionable, as strange and uncouth? Howsoever, as these bats and owls were made for the night, being accordingly shaped, foul and ill-favoured; so we know these vicious men, however they may please themselves, have in them a true deformity, fit to be shrouded in darkness; and, as they delight in the works of darkness, so they are justly reserved to a state of darkness.

untur cædunturque ab avibus quibusque luci-colis!

Longè aliter nobiscum se res habet. Filii tenebrarum qui sunt, filios lucis violentâ quâdam malitiâ persequi, fugare, deprædari ubiquè solent: par utrobique inimicitia est; viget tamen istìc prævaletque pars deterior. Numquid hinc fit istud, quòd lux spiritualis non minùs tenebrarum filiis exosa sit, quàm nox naturalis alacribus illis diei clientibus esse solet? aut verò hinc forsan, quòd tenebrarum filii, haud minùs sibi jus proprietatis in sæculo hoc vendicantes, quàm alites illi in æthere claro illuminatoque faciunt, pium quemque, ut peregrinum prodigiosumque animal, horrent et insectantur? Quicquid sit, ut vespertiliones ac bubones isti, nocti quasi destinati factique videntur, atque ideo deformitatem quandam turpitudinemque præ se ferunt; ita novimus nos hosce pravos improbosque, utut sibi ipsi perplaceant, verè fædos esse, idoneosque qui tenebris usque obnubilentur; et, uti operibus tenebrarum unicè delectantur, ita et ad conditionem horroris ac tenebrarum plenam meritò reservari.

On the sight of a well-fleeced sheep. CXXI. *Viso vellere ovino.*

WHAT a warm winter-coat hath God provided, for this quiet innocent creature! As, indeed, how wonderful is his wisdom, and goodness, in all his purveyances! Those creatures, which are apter for motion and withal most fearful by nature, hath he clad somewhat thinner; and hath allotted them safe and warm burrows, within the earth: those, that are fit for labour and use, hath he

ANIMAL verò hoc quietum innoxiumque, quàm, Dei sic providentis beneficio, vestitissimum est! Sed et in cæterorum omnium administratione, quàm stupenda est divina bonitas, et sapientia! Aptioribus motui animalibus naturâque formidolosioribus, leviorem tenuioremque tunicam induit; ac subterraneos præterea cuniculos, tutos quidem illos, paravit: quæ verò laboribus usibus-

furnished with a strong hide: and, for man, whom he hath thought good to bring forth naked, tender, helpless; he hath endued his parents and himself with that noble faculty of reason, whereby he may provide all manner of helps for himself. Yet again, so bountiful is God in his provisions, that he is not lavish; so distributing his gifts, that there is no more superfluity than want: those creatures, that have beaks, have no teeth; and those, that have shells without, have no bones within: all have enough; nothing hath all. Neither is it otherwise in that one kind, of man, whom he meant for the lord of all: variety of gifts is here mixed with a frugal dispensation: none hath cause to boast; none to complain: every man is as free from an absolute defect, as from perfection.

I desire not to comprehend, O Lord: teach me to do nothing, but wonder.

que humanis destinavit, crassiore ac firmiore tergore munivit: hominem, denique, quod spectat, nudum, tenellum, inopem in hanc lucem producturus; nobilem illam rationis facultatem parentibus ipsique demum indidit, quâ omnia quibus opus foret facilè suppeditare posset. Ita, tamen, munificus cùm sit Deus, prodigus non est; dona sua sic æquâ manu spargens, ut nihil cuiquam aut desit aut verò superfluat: animalia, quæ rostris freta sunt, dentibus carent; testacea quæ sunt, carent ossibus: sat est omnibus; nulli nimium. Neque aliter fit homini, quem creaturarum omnium dominum esse voluit Deus: donorum varietas parcâ quâdam largitate et istìc dispensatur: non est quòd glorietur quispiam; non est quòd queratur: ita quisque ab extremâ indigentiâ, ac à summâ perfectione, immunis est.

Non ausim, O Domine Deus, illud ambire ut comprehendam: doce me modò, ut mirari aliquando discam.

On the hearing of thunder. CXXII. *Audito tonitru.*

THERE is no grace, whereof I find so general a want in myself and others, as an awful fear of the infinite Majesty of God. Men are ready to affect and profess a kind of familiarity with God, out of a pretence of love: whereas if they knew him aright, they could not think of him without dread, nor name him without trembling. Their narrow hearts strive to conceive of him, according to the scantling of their own strait and ignorant apprehension: whereas they should only desire to have their thoughts swallowed up, with an adoring won-

NULLA cogitanti mihi virtus occurrit, cujus adeò universalem defectum in me aliisque persentisco, ac quæ tremendæ Dei Majestati debetur usque reverentiæ. Homines sæpiùs familiaritatem quandam cum Deo affectare ac profiteri, sub specie sancti amoris, nimio quàm proclives sumus: quem si rectè cognoscerent mortales, nec absque pavore cogitarent, nec absque tremore nominarent quidem. Augusta illorum corda juxta tenuem intellectûs sui, nimiùm incapacis, modulum, de Deo sentire ac imaginari solent: cùm illud oporteret tantùm

der of his divine incomprehensibleness. Though he thunder not always, he is always equally dreadful. There is none of his works, which doth not bewray Omnipotency. I blush at the sauciness of vain men, that will be circumscribing the powerful acts of the Almighty, within the compass of natural causes; forbearing to wonder, at what they profess to know. Nothing but ignorance can be guilty of this boldness. There is no Divinity, but in an humble fear; no philosophy, but a silent admiration.

ambire ac studere sedulò, ut, divinæ incomprehensibilitatis stupore et adoratione, toti absorbeantur. Non semper tonat ille quidem, æquè tamen semper tremendus. Ex omnibus quotquot uspiam fiunt operibus ejus, nullum non prodit Omnipotentiam. Rubore profectò suffundor, quoties vanorum hominum audaciam cogito, qui actus Omnipotentis, intra naturalium causarum cancellos circumscribere non verentur; illud mirari nolentes, quod scire profitentur. Sola inscitia tantæ hujus audaciæ rea est. Una est in humillimâ quâdam reverentiâ, Theologia; una, in tacito stupore, Philosophia.

On the sight of a hedgehog.

CXXIII. *Conspecto erinaceo, vel echino.*

I MARVELLED, at the first reading, what the Greeks meant by that proverb of theirs, "The fox knows many pretty wiles, but the hedgehog knows one great one:" but, when I considered the nature and practice of this creature, I easily found the reason of that speech; grounded upon the care and shift, that it makes for its own preservation. While it is under covert, it knows how to bar the fore-door against the cold northern and eastern blasts; and to open the back-door, for quieter and calmer air. When it is pursued, it knows how to roll up itself round within those thorns, with which nature hath environed it: so as the dog, instead of a beast, finds now nothing but a ball of pricks to wound his jaws; and goes away crying from so untoothsome a prey.

MIRABAR equidem, primo intuitu, quid sibi voluerint Græci diverbio illo suo, Πολλα μέν, &c. "Multa quidem scire vulpeculam, erinaceum verò unum quiddam sed magnum:" at, cùm naturam moresque animalis hujusce perpendissem, facilè intellexi quò respexerit adagium illud; unumque illud magnum comperi, curam salutis suæ callidè satis conservandæ. Quamdiu siquidem sub tectorio suo delitescit, ostium suum aquilonaris orientalisque venti flatibus rigidioribus obstruere catè novit; posticum verò aperire, ut leniore interim aurâ commodè perfruatur. Egressum foràs insequitur canis, jam modò comprehensurus, in globum illico convolvitur erinaceus, scntibusque illis quibus ipsum undique munivit natura ita totus jacet circumseptus: ut delusus hostis, vice bestiæ, quam avidè venabatur, nihil præter pilam quandam spinosam, quâ fauces ipsi miserè doleant, reperire pos-

He, that sent the sluggard to school to the pismire, sends also in effect the careless and imprudent man to the hedgehog, while he saith, *If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself.* The main care of any creature is self-preservation: whatsoever doth that best, is the wisest. These creatures, that are all body, have well improved the instincts of nature, if they can provide for their bodily safety: man, that is a reasonable soul, shall have done nothing, if he make not sure work for the better part.

O God, make me soul-wise: I shall never envy their craft, that pity my simplicity.

sit; jamque a prædâ tam ingratâ, non sine clamore, territus ac sauciatus aufugit.

Qui formicæ ignavum tradidit in disciplinam, echino itidem securum videtur improvidumque demandâsse, dum, *Si sapis*, ais, *tibimet ipsi sapis.* Animantium cuique præcipuè incumbit suæ salutis cura conatusque: quicquid verò hoc optimè omnium præstiterit, meritò audit prudentissimum. Quæ merum corpus sunt animalia, naturæ instinctui fecerunt satis, si quæ ad corporis tutelam spectant solicitè sibi prospexerint: homo autem, qui ratione insuper præditus est, nihil egisse judicabitur, nisi meliori sui parti largè tutòque proviserit.

O Deus, animæ meæ fac sapiam satis: astutiæ illorum, qui simplicitatis meæ miserentur, si invidero, dispeream.

CXXIV.

On the sight of a goat. *Viso capro.*

THIS creature is in an ill name. It is not for any good qualities, that God hath made choice of the goat, to resemble the wicked and reprobate soul. It is unruly, and salacious, and noisome.

I cannot see one of them, but I presently recall to my thoughts the woeful condition of those on the left-hand, whom God hath set aside to so fearful a damnation. They are here mixed with the flock: their colour differs nothing from the sheep; or if we do discern them, by their rougher coat and odious scent, we sever ourselves from them: but, the time shall come, when he shall sever them from us, who hath appointed our innocency to the fold, and their

Malè audit hoc animal. Neque quid præ se fert boni, quòd ex aliis omnibus à Deo ipso eligatur istud, quo improbæ reprobæque animæ conditio aptissimè exprimatur. Petulcus est ilicet, salax, fætidus.

Quoties sanè hircum conspicio, non possum non in animum revocare horrendum eorum statum, quos ad sinistram sepositos ad gehennam devovit justus vindex Deus. In terris quidem gregi fortè miscentur isti: nec externo colore à genuinis ovibus quicquam discrepant; quòd si quem forsan horum, hirsutâ pelle, tetro infestoque odore, dignoscere contigerit, nosmetipsos forte tantisper dum subducimus: at, veniet aliquando dies, quo à nobis illos æternùm segregabit is,

harmfulness to an everlasting slaughter. Onwards, if they climb higher than we; and feed upon those craggy cliffs, which we dare scarce reach to with our eyes; their boldness is not greater than their danger, neither is their ascent more perilous than their ruin deadly.

qui innocentiam nostram caulæ assignavit, eorumque nequitiam perpetuæ, quam meriti sunt, lanienæ. Interim verò scandant illi, quantum lubet; celsissimè, præruptisque in montibus, quos vix quidem nos oculis audemus attingere, securè pascantur; non est audacia ipsorum periculo suo major, nec ascensus præceps magis quàm ruina certa deploranda.

CXXV.

On the sight of the blind and the lame.

Cæco et claudo unà conspectis.

HERE is a true natural commerce of senses. The blind man hath legs; the lame man hath eyes: the lame man lends his eyes to the blind; the blind man lends his legs to the lame; and now both of them move, where otherwise both must sit still and perish. It is hard to say, whether is more beholden to other: the one gives strength, the other direction; both of them equally necessary to motion.

Though it be not in other cases so sensible, yet surely this very traffic of faculties is that, whereby we live; neither could the world subsist without it: one man lends a brain; another, an arm: one, a tongue; another, a hand. He, that knows wherefore he made all, hath taken order, to improve every part to the benefit of the whole. What do I wish ought that is not useful? And if there be any thing in me, that may serve to the good of others, it is not mine, but the Church's. I cannot live, but by others: it were injurious, if others should not likewise share with me.

VERUM istìc est et naturale sensuum commercium. Cæco pedes sunt; claudo, oculi: claudus cæco oculos commodat; cæcus claudo pedes; jamque movet uterque, aliter verò quiescant ambo pereantque necesse est. Uter horum plus alteri debeat, nescio: hic vires dat, ille viam dirigit; utrunque motui æquè necessarium.

Certè, ipsum hoc facultatum commercium, etsi aliis in rebus non ita liquidò pateat, illud est, quo vivimus; et sine quo, ne mundus quidem posset subsistere: hic cerebrum affert; ille, brachium: lingnam, hic; ille, manum. Qui solus novit cur ista omnia creaverit, ita etiam singula disposuit, ut unaquæque pars communi totius universi beneficio aliquid conferat. Quorsum optarim ego inutile quicquam? Si quid verò in me sit, quod aliorum bono inserviat, non meum est, ilicet, sed Ecclesiæ. Absque aliorum ope, vivere non possum: injurius essem, nisi me aliis itidem æquè communicarem.

On the sight of a map of the world. CXXVI. *Visâ tabulâ orbis geographicâ.*

WHAT a poor little spot is a country! A man may hide with his thumb, the great territories of those, that would be accounted Monarchs. In vain, should the great Cham, or the great Mogul, or Prester John, seek here for his court: it is well, if he can find his kingdom, amongst these parcels. And, if we take all together, these shreds of islands and these patches of continent, what a mere indivisible point they are, in comparison of that vast circle of heaven, wherewith they are encompassed!

It is not easy for a man to be known to that whole land wherein he lives: but if he could be so famous, the next country perhaps never hears of his name: and, if he can attain to be talked of there, yet the remoter parts cannot take notice that there is such a thing: and if they did all speak of nothing else, what were he the better? O the narrow bounds of earthly glory! O the vain affection of human applause! Only that man is happily famous, who is known and recorded in heaven.

Quàm minutula est, parvæque lituræ similis, regio aliqua tota! Magna eorum imperia, qui Monarchæ audire volunt, facilè quis vel pollice uno tegat. Frustrà, hìc aulam sibi quærat magnus ille Tartarorum Chanus, Mogores Indus, aut Ethiopum, quisquis est, Imperator: satis est, si regnum quisque suum, inter tot orbis segmina, indigitare possit. Et, si insularum ista fragmenta continentisque insuper minutiæ in unum colligantur, quàm nihil aliud sunt hæc omnia nisi punctum indivisibile, præ vasto cœli ambitu, quo cinguntur universa!

Haud facile homini est patriæ suæ toti innotescere: quòd si forsan eò usque fama ipsius pertingere possit, terræ tamen vicinæ nomen ejus prorsùs inauditum est: vel, si et illìc per hominum ora volitare meruerit, partes saltem remotiores tale quiddam esse in rerum naturâ penitùs ignorant: tandem verò si demus, quod tamen nemo unquam mortalium assecutus est, uno omnium ore solum celebrari, quanto interim est ille reliquis melior beatiorve? O angustos terrenæ gloriæ fines! O inanem popularis auræ captationem! Solus ille, demum, verè fœliciterque celebris est, cujus nomen cœlo et notum est et inscriptum.

On the sight of hemlock. CXXVII. *Ad conspectum cicutæ.*

THERE is no creature of itself evil: misapplication may make the best so: and there is a good use to be made of the worst. This weed, which is too well proved to be poisonous, yet to the goat is medicinal; as serving, by the coldness of it, to

NULLA creaturarum ex se suâque naturâ mala est: applicatione quidem sinistra, vel optimum quæque fit mala: uti et, è contrà, pessima fieri potest usû salutaria. Herba hæc, quam nimia experientia venenosam probavit, capro tamen benignum satis

temper the feverous heat of that beast. So we see the marmoset eating of spiders; both for pleasure and cure.

Our ignorance may not bring a scandal upon God's workmanship; or, if it do, his wisdom knows how, to make a good use even of our injury. I cannot say, but the very venom of the creatures is to excellent purpose: how much more their beneficial qualities! If ought hurt us, the fault is ours; in mistaking the evil for good: in the mean time, we owe praise to the Maker, and to the creature a just and thankful allowance.

pharmacum est; quippe quæ, frigiditate nimiâ, febricitantis animalis calorem optimè temperet. Ita cercopithecus araneas liberè comedit; dapes hinc sibi parans et remedia.

Non est quòd ignorantia nostra opificio Dei contumeliam inferat; vel, si nos istoc ausi, satis novit summa ipsius sapientia, hoc, quicquid est injuriæ, in bonum sibi convertere. Indubium planè est, ipsum creaturarum venenum commodis usibus inservire: quanto magis qualitates earum beneficas! Si quid fortè nobis noceat, in nos cudendum est ilicet; pro bono malum incautè imprudenterque eligentibus. Interim, Creatori laudes, creaturis verò æquam gratamque comprobationem, debemus.

CXXVIII.

On a flower-de-luce.

THIS flower is but unpleasingly fulsome for scent; but the root of it is so fragrant, that the delicatest ladies are glad to put it into their sweet bags: contrarily, the rose tree hath a sweet flower, but a savourless root: and the saffron yields an odoriferous and cordial spire, while both the flower and the root are unpleasing. It is with vegetables, as with metals.

God never meant to have his best always in view: neither meant he to have all eminences concealed. He would have us to know him, to be both secretly rich, and openly bountiful. If we do not use every grace in its own kind, God loses the thanks, and we the benefit.

Viso lilio.

FLOS iste satis ingratum præbet naribus odorem; cujus tamen radix adeò redolet, ut ab heroinis delicatissimis inter aromata fragrantissma reponi soleat: rosa, è contrà, florem habet admodum dulcem, radicem verò planè inodoram: crocus, flavas quasdam virgulas emittit non minùs suaves quàm salutares, dum et flos et radix sensui meritò displiceant. Ut vegetabilibus hisce fit, sic pariter et metallis.

Noluit Deus optima quæque semper oculis patere: neque, ex adverso, præstantissima quæque celari voluit. Scire nempe nos voluit esse se, et clàm divitem, et palàm beneficum. Si unoquoque Dei dono, suo genere ac loco, parùm utamur; amittit Deus debitas gratias, nos fructum et beneficium.

On the sight of two trees, one high, the other broad.

CXXIX. *De arboribus duabus, altâ unâ, latâ alterâ.*

THOSE trees, that shoot up in height, are seldom broad; as, contrarily, those trees, that are spreading, are seldom tall: it were too much ambition in that plant, which would be both ways eminent.

Thus it is with men. The covetous man, that affects to spread in wealth, seldom cares to aspire unto height of honour: the proud man, whose heart is set upon preferment, regards not, in comparison thereof, the growth of his wealth. There is a poor shrub in a valley, that is neither tall nor broad, nor cares to be either, which speeds better than they both. The tall tree is cut down, for timber; the broad tree is lopped, for fire-wood; besides, that the tempest hath power on them both: whereas the low shrub is neither envied by the wind, nor threatened by the axe; but fostered rather, for that little shelter which it affords the shepherd. If there be glory in greatness, meanness hath security. Let me never envy their diet, that would rather be unsafe, than inglorious.

QUÆ proceriores sunt arbores, rarò admodum expanduntur latiùs; è contrà, rarissima est in latioribus plantis proceritas: ambitione nimiâ laboraret illa plantarum, quæ utroque modo eminere contenderet.

Idem et hominibus usuvenit. Avarus, cui divitiæ maximo in pretio sunt quique ad metalla sese damnavit, ultrò honoris adsequi fastigium parùm curat: ex adverso, superbus, cujus animus honoribus ambiendis totus incumbit, præ his, divitias facilè aspernatur. Est quidem humilis frutex in valle subsidens, qui neque procerus neque amplus est, neutri tamen invidet, utroque longè fœlicior. Procerior nempe hæc arbor, ædificiis struendis exscinditur; latior verò illa, alendo igni resecatur; adde, quòd tempestatibus utraque magis sit obnoxia: dum arbustum humilius à venti invidiâ et securis ictu, securum usque crescit; magisque fovetur indies, ut pastori decumbenti tantillum umbræ præbeat. Esto in summâ dignitate gloria, sua est mediocritati securitas. Ne mihi invidiam moveat unquam illorum optio, qui malètuti malunt esse, quàm inglorii.

On the sight of a drunken man.

CXXX. *Ad conspectum ebrii.*

REASON is an excellent faculty; and, indeed, that, which alone differenceth us from brute creatures: without which, what is man, but a two-legged beast? And, as all precious things are tender, and subject to miscarriage; so is this, above others: the want of some little sleep,

FACULTAS longè omnium præstantissima ratio est; et quæ, revera, sola nos à brutis distinguit: sine quâ, quid aliud est homo, quàm brutum bipes? Pretiosa quæque nti teneriora vulgò sunt, tantoque magis periculis obnoxia; ita, præ aliis, ratio: brevis quædam ἀγρυπνία, febris

the violence of a fever, or one cup too much, puts it into utter distemper. What can we make of this thing? man, I cannot call him. He hath shape; so hath a dead corpse, as well as he: he hath life; so hath a beast, as well as he: reason, either for the time he hath not; or, if he have it he hath it so depraved and marred for the exercise of it, that brutishness is much less ill-beseeming. Surely, the natural bestiality is so much less odious than the moral, as there is difference in the causes of both: that is of God's making; this, of our own: it is no shame to the beast, that God hath made him so; it is a just shame to a man, that he hath made himself a beast.

violentia, unumve plus æquo poculum, totam disturbat distrahitque. Quid de hoc animali, homo certè quidem non est, tandem dicemus? Externam adhuc formam habet; habet et cadaver, æquè perfectam: vitam sortitur insuper; sortitur æquè et brutum: rationem, aut pro tempore penitùs perdidit; aut, saltem ita prorsùs, quoad exercitium corrupit vitiavitque, ut ipsa, fas mihi sic loqui, brutalitas multò minùs dedeceat. Certè, bestia naturalis, eo est morali minùs odiosa, quo causæ utriusque differunt magis: illum Deus ipse fecit; hanc, nos quidem ipsi: nihil est, quod brutum pudeat sic fuisse conditum; hominem autem est, quod maximè dispudeat in brutum turpiter degenerâsse.

On the whetting of a scythe.

CXXXI. *Viso messore falcem coticulâ exacuente.*

RECREATION is intended to the mind, as whetting is to the scythe; to sharpen the edge of it, which otherwise would grow dull and blunt. He, therefore, that spends his whole time in recreation, is ever whetting, never mowing: his grass may grow, and his steed starve. As, contrarily, he, that always toils and never recreates, is ever mowing, never whetting; labouring much to little purpose: as good no scythe, as no edge. Then only doth the work go forward, when the scythe is so seasonably and moderately whetted, that it may cut; and so cuts, that it may have the help of sharpening. I would so interchange, that I neither be dull with work, nor idle and wanton with recreation.

OTIUM ludusque animo, ut cos falci, aciei scilicet quæ nimis aliter hebesceret exacuendæ, inservire et solet et debet. Quisquis, itaque, totum temporis sui ludo otiove impendit, semper exacuit, nunquam metit: floridum illi fortè gramen est, equus famelicus. Quique, è contrà, sine intermissione ullâ laboribus desudat, metit ille semper, exacuit nunquam; multum operæ nequicquam perdens: quid enim juvat falx, cui deest acies? Tum demum res benè succedit, cùm ita tempestivè ac moderatè falx acuitur, ut scindere possit; atque ita scindit, ut cote interim indigeat. Sic mihi intermutentur vices, ut neque hebescam labore, nec otio nimio torpeam.

On the sight of a looking-glass. CXXXII. *Admoto speculo.*

WHEN I look in another man's face, I see that man; and that man sees me, as I do him: but, when I look in my glass, I do not see myself; I see only an image or representation of myself: howsoever it is like me, yet it is not I. It is for an ignorant child, to look behind the glass; to find out the babe, that he seeth: I know it is not there; and that the resemblance varies, according to the dimness or different fashion of the glass.

At our best, we do but thus see God, here below. One sees him more clearly; another, more obscurely: but all, in a glass. Hereafter, we shall see him, not as he appears, but as he is: so shall we see him in the face, as he sees us: the face of our glorified spirits shall see the glorious face of him, who is the God of Spirits. In the mean time, the proudest dame shall not more ply her glass, to look upon that face of hers, which she thinks beautiful; than I shall gaze upon the clearest glass of my thoughts, to see that face of God, which I know to be infinitely fair and glorious.

Cùm alterius faciem intueor, hominem video; qui et me vicissim, æquè videt: at, cùm speculum inspicio, mei tantùm imaginem, per omnia quidem mihi persimilem, video; meipsum interea non video. Puerorum est, puerulum, quem vident, pone speculum latentem quærere: ego nihil ibi subesse sat novi; sed et similitudinem quoque variari, juxta vel obscuritatem vel formam speculi variam.

Cùm vel optimè sumus dispositi, non aliter nos Deum, in terris, videre possumus. Hic quidem clariùs ipsum videt; obscuriùs, ille: uterque, in speculo tamen. In cœlis, Deum videbimus, non uti apparet, sed ut revera est: faciem ejus intuebimur, quemadmodum et ille nostram: spiritûs nostri glorificata facies, gloriosissimam illius faciem, qui est Spirituum Deus, liberè intuebitur. Interea temporis, non frequentiùs fixis in speculum oculis hærebit fœminarum superbissima, vultum, quem ipsa credit formosissimum, curiosè speculando; quàm ego clarissimum cogitationum mearum speculum oculis usurpabo meis, ut vultum illum Dei contempler, quem infinitè pulchrum et splendidum esse novi.

On the shining of a piece of rotten wood. CXXXIII. *Viso ligni cariosi splendore.*

HOW bright doth this wood shine! When it is in the fire, it will not so beam forth, as it doth in this cold darkness. What an emblem is here of our future estate! This piece, while it grew

Quàm clarè micat lignum istud! In foco, non ita radiabit, ac jam modò sub mediis tenebris facit. Quàm pulchrum hic est futuræ conditionis nostræ emblema! Quamdiu lignum hoc arbori con-

in the tree, shone not at all: now, that it is putrified, it casts forth this pleasing lustre.

Thus it is with us: while we live here, we neither are nor seem other than miserable; when we are dead once, then begins our glory: then doth the soul shine in the brightness of heavenly glory; then doth our good name shine upon earth, in those beams, which, before, envy had either held in or over-cast. Why are we so over-desirous of our growth, when we may be thus advantaged, by our rottenness?

creverat, nihil quicquam splenduit: jam verò, putrefactum, fulgorem illico et lucem emittit.

Ita nos homines, quamdiu vitam istìc degimus, toti et sumus et videmur miseri; non citiùs morti cessimus, quàm gloria nostra statim elucere cæperit: ecce tunc, et cælestis gloriæ fulgore coruscat anima; et nomen nostrum, in terris superstes, radios illos liberè emittit, quos, antea aut prorsùs suppresserat invidia, aut saltem obfuscârat. Quìd nunc ita crescere nimis discupimus, cùm nos, ex ipsâ quidem putredine, tantum lucrari constiterit.

On an ivy-tree. CXXXIV. *Visâ hederâ.*

Behold a true emblem of false love. Here are kind embracements, but deadly: how close doth this weed cling unto that oak, and seems to hug and shade it! but, in the mean time, draws away the sap; and, at last, kills it.

Such is a harlot's love: such is a parasite's. Give me that love and friendship, which is between the vine and the elm; whereby, the elm is no whit worse, and the vine much the better. That wholesome and noble plant doth not so close wind itself about the tree that upholds it, as to gall the bark, or to suck away the moisture: and, again, the elm yields a beneficial supportation to that weak, though generous, plant. As God, so wise men, know to measure love, not by profession and compliment, which is commonly most high and vehement in the falsest, but by reality of performance.

Ecce istìc fucati amoris verum emblema. Blandi hi sunt, sed fatales amplexus: quàm intimè herba hæc quercui se adjungit, arctequè amplexa umbram præbet non ingratam! dum, interea, succum illi suffuratur clanculùm; vitamque, tandem, exugit.

Talis est meretricis affectus: talis et parasiti. Da mihi veram mutuamque vitis et ulmi amicitiam; eam scilicet, quâ et viti melius sit, et ulmo nihilo pejus. Salutaris illa nobilisque planta suffulcientem arborem non adeò rudibus ulmis circumplectitur, ut corticem lædere possit, succumve exhaurire: ulmus, è contrà, debilem quidem illam, at generosam tamen, alumnam benignè sustinet. Ut Deus, ita et homines, satis nôrunt, amorem, non ex merâ professione externisque ceremoniis, quæ vel simulatoribus excidunt sæpenumerò calidiores, sed ex ipsis actionibus, æstimare. Ille mihi inimicus

He is no enemy, that hurts me not: I am not his friend, whom I desire not to benefit.

non est, qui nocere nollet: nec ego illi amicus, cui non cupiam benefacere.

On a quartan ague. CXXXV. *De frebre quartanâ.*

I HAVE known, when those things, which have made a healthful man sick, have been the means of making a sick man whole. The quartan hath of old been justly styled the shame of physicians; yet, I have more than once observed it to be cured by a surfeit. One devil is sometime used, for the ejection of another.

Thus have I also seen it, in the sickness of the soul. The same God, whose justice is wont to punish sin with sin, even his mercy doth so use the matter, that he cures one sin by another. So have we known a proud man healed, by the shame of his uncleanness; a furious man healed, by a rash bloodshed. It matters not greatly, what the medicine be, while the physician is infinitely powerful, infinitely skilful. What danger can there be of my safety, when God shall heal me, as well by evil, as by good?

EXPERTUS sum aliquando, ea ipsa, quibus morbum contrahit sanus, media etiam fuisse, quibus ægrotus sanaretur. Febris quartana medicorum opprobium olim, nec immeritò, audiit; quam tamen, merâ crapulâ, non semel sede suâ pulsam observavi. Est ubi dæmonum unus, alterius ejectioni operam elocat.

Sed et idem etiam, in animæ morbis comperi. Idem Deus, cujus justitia peccatum peccato plectere solet, non rarò etiam, mirificè operante ipsius misericordiâ, peccatum etiam peccato, justissimè tamen, medetur. Sic superbum turpissimæ, in quam inciderat, libidinis, pudore conversum aliquando novimus; sic furiosè iracundum, temero quodam homicidio cicuratum vidimus. Non est quòd de pharmaco nimiùm laboremus, dum medici infinitam cùm artem tum potestatem intelligimus. De salute meâ quid est quòd metuam, cùm Deus mihi possit non salubribus modò, sed et noxiis remediis opitulari?

On the sight of a loaded cart. CXXXVI. *Conspecto plaustro benè onusto.*

IT is a passionate expression, wherein God bemoans himself of the sins of Israel, *Ye have pressed me, as a cart is pressed with sheaves.* An empty cart runs lightly away: but if it be soundly loaden, it goes sadly, sets hard, groans under the

Patheticè admodum exprimitur illa Dei de peccatis Israelis querimonia, *Pressistis me, plaustri instar tritico onusti.* Plaustrum vacuum leviter decurrit: gravi verò pondere saburratum, difficulter et ægrè progeditur, gemitque sub pondere, altos terræ

weight, and makes deep impressions; the wheels creak, and the axle-tree bends; and all the frame of it is put unto the utmost stress.

He, that is Omnipotent, can bear any thing, but too much sin: his justice will not let his mercy be overstrained. No marvel, if a guilty soul say, *Mine iniquity is greater than I can bear;* when the Infinite God complains of the weight of men's sins. But, let not vain men think, that God complains out of the want of power, but out of the abundance of mercy. He cannot be the worse for our sins: we are. It grieves him, to be over-provoked to our punishment. Then doth he account the cart to crack, yea to break, when he is urged to break forth into just vengeance.

O Saviour, the sins of the whole world lay upon thee: thou sweatedst blood, under the load. What would become of me, if I should bear but one sheaf of that load; every ear whereof, yea every grain of that ear, were enough to press down my soul to the nethermost hell?

cedenti sulcos imprimens; crepant rotæ, incurvatur axis; tota denique fabrica quàm maximè urgetur opprimiturque.

Omnia, præter peccatum, facilè ferre potest, qui Omnipotens est: non patitur justitia ejus, ut misericordia ipsius nimiùm prægravetur. Mirum non est, si anima peccatorum conscia dixerit, *Major est iniquitas mea quàm ut ferre possim;* cùm Deus ipse Infinitus peccatorum nostrorum pondere se oppressum queritur. Absit, tamen, ut querelam hanc vanus quispiam putet ex potentiæ defectu, et non potiùs ex superabundantiâ miserecordiæ profectam. Peccata nostra non possunt Deum quicquam lædere: nos lædunt ipsos gravissimè. Dolet ipsi, cùm ad pœnas nobis infligendas provocatur. Tum crepitare illi plaustrum videtur, imò frangi, cùm justam de nobis vindictam sumere, quasi invitus, urgetur.

Bone Jesu, peccata mundi universa humeris tuis imposita sunt: tu sanguinis grumos exudabas ubertim, tanto pondere gravatus. Quid de me actum foret, si vel unicum de totâ illâ messe manipulum subiissem; cujus quælibet spica, imò vel unicum spicæ granulum, ad imum usque barathrum animam meam deprimeret?

On the sight of a dwarf. CXXXVII. *Viso quodam nano.*

Amongst all the bounteous gifts of God, what is it, that he hath equally bestowed upon all; except it be our very being, while we are? He hath not given to all men the same stature of body,

Ex omnibus quotquot sunt Dei beneficiis, quid est, quod is æquè omnibus impertire voluerit; nisi modò ipsum illud, quòd sumus? non eandem corporis mensuram, easdem ingenii vires, eandem

not the same strength of wit, not the same capacity of memory, not the same beauty of parts, not the same measure of wealth or honour.

Thus hath he done also in matter of grace. There are spiritual dwarfs: there are giants. There are perfect men; children; babes; embryos. This inequality doth so much more praise the mercy and wisdom of the Giver, and exercise the charity and thankfulness of the receiver. The essence of our Humanity doth not consist in stature: he, that is little of growth, is as much man, as he, that is taller. Even so also spiritually, the quantity of grace doth not make the Christian, but the truth of it. I shall be glad and ambitious, to add cubits to my height; but, withal, it shall comfort me to know, that I cannot be so low of stature, as not to reach unto heaven.

memoriæ capacitatem, eundem decorum partium, eundemve aut divitiarum aut honoris cumulum.

Eodem etiam modo dona gratiæ suæ dispensavit Deus. Sunt enim nani spirituales: sunt etiam et gigantes. Viri sunt perfecti; sunt et pueri; infantes; embryones. Imparitas hæc eò magis benignitatem sapientiamque Largientis extollit, et charitatem quoque gratitudinemque recipientis exercet. Homines quòd sumus non in ipsâ corporis mensurâ consistit: pusillus quisque æquè homo est, ac proceritate eminentior. Ita etiam et spiritualiter sese habet: quantitas gratiæ non est, quæ Christianum constituit, sed veritas. Illud mihi in votis erit, ut cubitos multos staturæ animæ meæ adjicere possim; hâc tamen, interea, firmabo me solaborque confidentiâ, quòd sciam, non posse me adeò humilem esse, quin ut cœlum aliquando attingam.

On an importunate beggar.

CXXXVIII. *Audito paulò importuniore mendico.*

It was a good rule of him, that bade us learn to pray of beggars. With what zeal, doth this man sue! With what feeling expressions! with how forcible importunity! When I meant to pass by him with silence, yet his clamour draws words from me. When I speak to him, though with excuses, rebukes, denials, repulses; his obsecrations, his adjurations draw from me that alms, which I meant not to give. How he uncovers his sores, and shews his impotence, that my eyes may help his tongue to

Non malè profectò monuit, qui nos à mendicis orare discere consuluit. Quanto zelo, instat iste? Quàm fervidis votis, quàm efficaci importunitate, vim infert viatori! Cùm antea silentio ipsum præterire proposuissem, clamor rogitantis verba mihi elicit. Alloquor, non alio quidem quàm excusationum, minarum, increpationis, commotiorisque repulsæ sono; ille, obsecrationibus adjurationibusque urget acriùs; nec desistit, donec tandem eleemosynam à me, quàmlibet reluctante, impetraverit. Quàm

plead! With what oratory, doth he force my compassion! so as it is scarce any thank to me that he prevails.

denudat sibi ulcera, impotentiamque palam ostendit, ut oculi etiam mei linguæ exoranti suppetias ferant! Quàm bellè rhetoricatur, miráque arte miserecordiam mihi extorquet! ut vix mihi gratias nunc deberi sentiam, qui, post tot tamque potentes preces, annuerim.

Why do I not thus to my God? I am sure I want no less, than the neediest: the danger of my want is greater: the alms, that I crave, is better; the store and mercy of the Giver, infinitely more.

Quidni et ego sic me Deo geram? Non minùs certè egeo, quàm qui mortalium omnium pauperrimus: sed et gravius multò est inopiæ meæ periculum: eleemosynæ, quas peto, longè meliores sunt; opulentia et miserecordia Largientis, immanè quanto major!

Why shouldest thou give me, O God, that which I care not to ask? Oh, give me a true sense of my wants: and then, I cannot be cool, in asking; thou canst not be difficult, in condescending.

O Deus, cur tu ultrò mihi porrigeres, quod rogare usque volens detrectaverim? Faxis, obsecro, egestatem meam verè persentiscam: tum demum, neque ego frigidè te rogare potero; neque tu ægrè, quod petîerim, erogare.

CXXXIX.

On a medicinal potion. *Viso pharmaco quodam.*

How loathsome a draught is this! How offensive, both to the eye, and to the scent, and to the taste? Yea, the very thought of it, is a kind of sickness: and, when it is once down, my very disease is not so painful for the time, as my remedy. How doth it turn the stomach, and wring the entrails; and works a worse distemper, than that, whereof I formerly complained! And yet it must be taken, for health: neither could it be so wholesome, if it were less unpleasing; neither could it make me whole, if it did not first make me sick.

Quàm nauseosum est hoc poculum! Oculis, naribus, gustui quàm ingratum! Cujus vel ipsa cogitatio, morbi quoddam genus est: et, ubi exhauserim, morbo ipso graviùs me affligit hoc, quicquid est, remedii. Quanto dolore stomachum afficit, intestiña torquet; vehementiorem in corpore intemperiem excitans, quàm quâ priùs laborabam. Sumendum tamen est, valetudinis ergò: neque revera adeò salutare foret, si minùs foret ingratum; nec me sanum deinceps præstaret, nisi priùs ægrotum præstitisset.

Such are the chastisements of God, and the reproofs of a friend; harsh, troublesome,

Tales omnino sunt, et castigationes Dei, et amici reprehensiones; duræ forsan, pro tem-

grievous: but, in the end, they yield *the peaceable fruit of righteousness.*

Why do I turn away my head, and make faces, and shut mine eyes, and stop my nostrils, and nauseate and abhor to take this harmless potion for health; when we have seen mountebanks, to swallow dismembered toads, and drink the poisonous broth after them, only for a little ostentation and gain?

It is only weakness, and want of resolution, that is guilty of this squeamishness. Why do not I cheerfully take, and quaff up that bitter cup of affliction, which my wise and good God hath mixed for the health of my soul?

pore, ac molestæ: quæ tamen postmodo καρπὸν εἰρηνικὸν opportunè producunt.

Quìd ego nunc faciem indignabundus averto, oculos claudo, nares obstruo, et à certo morbi mei remedio tantopere abhorreo; cùm empiricos quosdam viderim, qui bufones discerptos audacter manducârint, moxque liquorem venenosum liberè absorpserint, idque vel lucri tantilli vel fortè ostentationis solius causâ?

Sola quædam imbecillitas, animique parùm audentis anxietas, fastidiosi hujusce affectûs rea est. Quin ego alacris mihi sumo, totumque exhaurio amarum afflictionis poculum, quod sapiens et benignus Deus in animæ meæ salutem ægro miscere voluit?

CXL.

On the sight of a wheel.

Ad conspectum rotæ.

THE Prophet meant it for no other than a fearful imprecation against God's enemies, *O my God, make them like unto a wheel:* whereby, what could he intend to signify, but instability of condition, and sudden violence of judgment? Those spokes of the wheel, that are now up, are, sooner than sight or thought, whirled down; and are straight raised up again, on purpose to be depressed. Neither can there be any motion so rapid and swift, as the circular.

It is a great favour of God, that he takes leisure in his affliction; so punishing us, that we have respites of repentance. There is life and hope, in these degrees of suffering; but those hurrying and whirling judgments of God have nothing in them, but wrath and confusion.

Dirissimè quidem hostibus Dei imprecari voluit Propheta, dum ait, *O Deus, facito eos rotæ similes:* quo, quid aliud innuere potuit, nisi conditionis eorum instabilitatem, subitique demum judicii violentiam? Isti nimirum rotæ radii, qui nunc sursum feruntur, jam, dicto aut cogitatione citiùs, deorsum volvuntur; moxque elevantur, ut illico deprimantur denuo. Neque ullus dari potest motus æquè velox rapidusque, ac circularis.

Magnam arguit Dei benignitatem, quòd, in pœnis infligendis, moras nectere soleat; ita nos puniens, ut resipiscentiæ adhuc tempus ultrà indulgeat. In hisce suppliciorum spatiis gradibusque, vita aliqua et spes residua est; at rapidissima illa vindicis Dei judicia, nihil planè,

O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger. I cannot deprecate thy rebuke: my sins call for correction: but I deprecate thine anger. Thou rebukest, even where thou lovest. So rebuke me, that, while I smart with thy rod, I may rejoice in thy mercy.

præter furorem confusionemque æternam, præ se ferunt.

O Domine, in excandescentiâ tuâ ne me redarguas. Castigationes tuas deprecari non possum: correctionem certè quandam peccata mea necessariò efflagitant: ego iram tuam supplex deprecor. Castigas tu nempe, quos amas. Ita me verberes, quæso, ut, dum vibices tuas dolens sentio, in misericordiâ tuâ lætus acquiescam.

A

HOLY RAPTURE;

OR,

A PATHETICAL MEDITATION

ON THE

LOVE OF CHRIST.

BY JOSEPH, BISHOP OF NORWICH.

MEDITATION

ON

THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

SECT. I.

The Love of Christ how passing knowledge; how free; of us, before we were.

WHAT is it, O Blessed Apostle, what is it, for which thou dost so earnestly bow thy knees, in the behalf of thine Ephesians, unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ? even this, that they *may know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge;* Eph. iii. 14, 19.

Give me leave, first, to wonder at thy suit; and, then, much more at what thou suest for. Were thine affections raised so high to thine Ephesians, that thou shouldst crave for them impossible favours? Did thy love so far overshoot thy reason, as to pray they might attain to the knowledge of that, which cannot be known? It is the love of Christ, which thou wishest they may know; and it is that love, which thou sayest is past all knowledge. What shall we say to this? Is it, for that there may be holy ambitions of those heights of grace, which we can never hope actually to obtain? Or is it rather, that thou supposest and prayest they may reach to the knowledge of that love, the measure whereof they could never aspire to know?

Surely so it is, O blessed Jesu. That thou hast loved us, we know; but how much thou hast loved us, is past the comprehension of angels. Those glorious spirits, as they desire to look into the deep mystery of our redemption, so they wonder to behold that divine love whereby it is wrought; but they can no more reach to the bottom of it, than they can affect to be infinite: for, surely, no less than an endless line can serve to fathom a bottomless depth. Such, O Saviour, is the abyss of thy love to miserable man. Alas! what do we poor wretched dust of the earth go about to measure it, by the spans and inches of our shallow thoughts? Far, far be such presumption from us: only admit us, O blessed Lord, to look at, to admire and adore that, which we give up for incomprehensible.

What shall we then say to this love, O Dear Jesu; both as thine, and as cast upon us? All earthly love supposeth some kind of equality, or proportion at least, betwixt the person that loves, and is loved: here, is none at all. So as, which is past wonder, extremes meet without a mean: for, lo, thou, who art the eternal and absolute Being, God blessed for ever, lovedst me, that had no being at all: thou lovedst me, both when I was not, and could never have been but by thee. It was from thy love, that I had any being at all: much more, that, when thou hadst given me a being, thou

shouldest follow me with succeeding mercies. Who but thou, who art infinite in goodness, would love that, which is not? Our poor sensual love is drawn from us, by the sight of a face or picture; neither is ever raised, but upon some pleasing motive: thou wouldest make that, which thou wouldest love; and wouldest love that, which thou hadst made. O God, was there ever love so free, so gracious, as this of thine? Who can be capable to love us, but men or angels? Men love us, because they see something in us, which they think amiable: angels love us, because thou doest so: but why dost thou, O Blessed Lord, love us, but because thou wouldest? There can be no cause of thy will, which is the cause of all things. Even so, Lord, since this love did rise only from thee, let the praise and glory of it rest only in thee.

SECT. II.

How free of us, that had made ourselves vile and miserable.

YET more, Lord, we had lost ourselves, before we were; and, having forfeited what we should be, had made ourselves perfectly miserable. Even when we were worse than nothing, thou wouldest love us.

Was there ever any eye enamoured of deformity? can there be any bodily deformity comparable to that of sin? yet, Lord, when sin had made us abominably loathsome, didst thou cast thy love upon us. A little scurf of leprosy, or some few nasty spots of morphew, or but some unsavoury scent, sets us off; and turns our love into detestation. But, for thee, O God, when we were become as foul and as ugly as sin could make us, even then was thy love enflamed towards us: even when we were weltering in our blood, thou saidst, "Live;" and washedst, and anointedst us, and clothedst us with a broidered work, and deckedst us with ornaments, and graciously espousedst us to thyself, and receivedst us into thine own bosom. *Lord, what is man, that thou art* thus *mindful of him; and the son of man, that thou* thus *visitest him?*

Oh, what are we, in comparison of thy once glorious angels? They sinned, and fell; never to be recovered; never to be loosed from those everlasting chains, wherein they are reserved to the Judgment of the Great Day. Whence is it then, O Saviour, whence is it, that thou hast shut up thy mercy from those thy more excellent creatures, and hast extended it to us vile sinful dust? whence, but that thou wouldest love man because thou wouldest?

Alas! it is discouragement enough to our feeble friendship, that he, to whom we wished well is miserable. Our love doth gladly attend upon and enjoy his prosperity; but, when his estate is utterly sunk, and his person exposed to contempt and ignominy, yea to torture and death, who is there, that will then put forth himself to own a forlorn and perishing friend? But for thee, O Blessed Jesu, so ardent was thy love to us, that it was not in the power of our extreme misery to abate it; yea so, as that the deploredness of our condition did but heighten that holy flame. What speak I of shame or sufferings? hell itself could not keep thee off from us: even from

that pit of eternal perdition didst thou fetch our condemned souls, and hast contrarily vouchsafed to put us into a state of everlasting blessedness.

SECT. III.

How yet free, of us, that were professed enemies.

THE common disposition of men pretends to a kind of justice, in giving men their own: so as they will repay love for love; and think they may for hatred return enmity. Nature itself then teacheth us, to love our friends: it is only grace, that can love an enemy.

But, as of injuries, so of enmities thereupon grounded, there are certain degrees: some are slight and trivial; some, main and capital. If a man do but scratch my face, or give some light dash to my fame, it is no great mastery, upon submission to receive such an offender to favour: but, if he have endeavoured to ruin my estate, to wound my reputation, to cut my throat; not only to pardon this man, but to hug him in my arms, to lodge him in my bosom as my entire friend, this would be no other than a high improvement of my charity.

O Lord Jesu, what was I, but the worst of enemies, when thou vouchsafedst to embrace me with thy loving mercy? how had I shamefully rebelled against thee; and yielded up all my members, as instruments of unrighteousness and sin! how had I crucified thee, the Lord of Life! how had I done little other, than trod under foot the Blessed Son of God; and counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing! how had I, in some sort, done despite unto the Spirit of Grace! yet, even then, in despite of all my most odious unworthiness, didst thou spread thine arms to receive me; yea, thou openedst thy heart to let me in. O love, passing not knowledge only, but wonder also! O mercy, not incident into any thing less comprehensible!

SECT. IV.

The wonderful Effects of the Love of Christ. His Incarnation.

BUT, O Dear Lord, when, from the object of thy mercy, I cast mine eyes upon the effects and improvement of thy divine favours, and see what thy love hath drawn from thee towards the sons of men, how am I lost in a just amazement!

It is that, which fetched thee down from the glory of the highest heavens; from the bosom of thine Eternal Father to this lower world, the region of sorrow and death. It is that, which, to the wonder of angels, clothed thee with this flesh of ours; and brought thee, who thoughtest it no robbery to be equal with God, to an estate, lower than thine own creatures.

O mercy, transcending the admiration of all the glorious spirits of heaven, that God would be incarnate! Surely, that all those celestial powers should be redacted to either worms or nothing, that all this goodly frame of creation should run back into its first con-

fusion or be reduced to one single atom, it is not so high a wonder, as for God to become man: those changes, though the highest nature is capable of, are yet but of things finite; this, is of an infinite subject, with which the most excellent of finite things can hold no proportion.

Oh, the great mystery of Godliness; *God manifested in the flesh, and seen of angels!* Those heavenly spirits had, ever since they were made, seen his most glorious Deity, and adored him as their omnipotent Creator: but, to see that God of Spirits invested with flesh, was such a wonder as had been enough, if their nature could have been capable of it, to have astonished even glory itself; and whether, to see him that was their God so humbled below themselves, or to see Humanity thus advanced above themselves, were the greater wonder to them, they only know.

It was your foolish misprision, O ye ignorant Lystrians, that you took the servants for the Master: here only is it verified, which you supposed, that God is come down to us in the likeness of man, and as man conversed with men.

What a disparagement do we think it was for the great monarch of Babylon, for seven years together as a beast to converse with the beasts of the field! yet, alas, beasts and men are fellow-creatures; made of one earth; drawing in the same air; returning, for their bodily part, to the same dust; symbolizing in many qualities, and in some mutually transcending each others': so as here may seem to be some terms of a tolerable proportion; since many men are in disposition too like unto beasts, and some beasts are in outward shape somewhat like unto men: but for him that was, and is, *God blessed for ever*, Eternal, Infinite, Incomprehensible, to put on flesh, and become a man amongst men, was to stoop below all possible disparities that heaven and earth can afford. O Saviour, the lower thine abasement was for us, the higher was the pitch of thy divine love to us.

SECT. V.

His Love, in his Sufferings.

YET, in this our human condition, there are degrees: one rules and glitters in all earthly glory; another sits despised in the dust: one passes the time of his life in much jollity and pleasure; another wears out his days in sorrow and discontentment. Blessed Jesu, since thou wouldest be a man, why wouldest thou not be the King of Men? since thou wouldest come down to our earth, why wouldest thou not enjoy the best entertainment the earth could yield thee? yea, since thou, who art the Eternal Son of God, wouldest be the Son of Man, why didst thou not appear in a state like to the King of Heaven, attended with the glorious retinue of angels? O yet greater wonder of mercies, the same infinite love, that brought thee down to the form of man, would also bring thee down, being man, to the form of a servant! So didst thou love man, that thou wouldest take part with him of his misery, that he might take part

with thee of thy blessedness: thou wouldest be poor, to enrich us: thou wouldest be burthened, for our ease; tempted, for our victory; despised, for our glory.

With what less than ravishment of spirit can I behold thee, who wert from everlasting clothed with glory and majesty, wrapped in rags! thee, who fillest heaven and earth with the majesty of thy glory, cradled in a manger! thee, who art the God of Power, fleeing in thy mother's arms from the rage of a weak man! thee, who art the God of Israel, driven to be nursed out of the bosom of thy Church! thee, who madest the heaven of heavens, busily working in the homely trade of a foster-father! thee, who commandest the devils to their chains, transported and tempted with that foul spirit! thee, who art God all-sufficient, exposed to hunger, thirst, weariness, danger, contempt, poverty, revilings, scourgings, persecution! thee, who art the just Judge of all the World, accused and condemned! thee, who art the Lord of Life, dying upon the tree of shame and curse! thee, who art the Eternal Son of God, struggling with thy Father's wrath! thee, who hast said, *I and my Father are one*, sweating drops of blood in thine agony; and crying out on the cross, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* thee, who hast the keys of hell and of death, lying sealed up in another man's grave!

O Saviour, whither hath thy love to mankind carried thee? What sighs, and groans, and tears, and blood hast thou spent upon us wretched men! How dear a price hast thou paid for our ransom! What raptures of spirit can be sufficient, for the admiration of thy so infinite mercy? Be thou swallowed up, O my soul, in this depth of divine love; and hate to spend thy thoughts any more upon the base objects of this wretched world, when thou hast such a Saviour to take them up.

SECT. VI.

His Love, in preparing Heaven for us.

But, O Blessed Jesu, if, from what thou hast suffered for me, I shall cast mine eyes upon what thou hast done for my soul, how is my heart divided betwixt the wonders of both! and may as soon tell how great either of them is, as whether of them is the greatest.

It is in thee, that I was elected from all eternity; and ordained to a glorious inheritance, before there was a world. We are wont, O God, to marvel at and bless thy provident beneficence to the first man; that, before thou wouldest bring him forth into the world, thou wert pleased to furnish such a world for him; so goodly a house over his head; so pleasant a paradise under his feet; such variety of creatures round about him, for his subjection and attendance. But how should I magnify thy mercy, who, before that man or that world had any being, hast so far loved me, as to pre-ordain me to a place of blessedness, in that heaven which should be; and to make me a coheir with my Christ of thy glory!

And oh, what a heaven is this, that thou hast laid out for me; how resplendent, how transcendently glorious! Even that lower pa-

radise, which thou providedst for the harbour of innocence and holiness, was full of admirable beauty, pleasure, magnificence; but, if it be compared with this paradise above, which thou hast prepared for the everlasting entertainment of restored souls, how mean and beggarly it was! O match too unequal, of the best piece of earth with the highest state of the heaven of heavens!

In the earthly paradise, I find thine angels, the Cherubim; but it was to keep man off from that garden of delight, and from the Tree of Life in the midst of it: but, in this heavenly one, I find millions of thy Cherubim and Seraphim rejoicing at man's blessedness, and welcoming the glorified souls to their heaven. There, I find but the shadow of that, whereof the substance is here. There, we were so possessed of life, that yet we might forfeit it: here, is life, without all possibility of death. Temptation could find access thither: here, is nothing but a free and complete fruition of blessedness. There, were delights fit for earthly bodies: here, is glory, more than can be enjoyed of blessed souls. That was watered with four streams, muddy and impetuous: in this, is *the pure river of the water of life, clear as chrystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.* There, I find thee only walking in the cool of the day: here, manifesting thy Majesty continually. There, I see only a most pleasant orchard, set with all manner of varieties of flourishing and fruitful plants: here, I find also the city of God, infinitely rich and magnificent; the building of the wall of it of jasper; and the city itself pure gold, like unto clear glass; and the foundations of the wall garnished with all manner of precious stones.

All, that I can here attain to see, is the pavement of thy celestial habitation. And, Lord, how glorious it is! how bespangled with the glittering stars; for number, for magnitude equally admirable! What is the least of them, but a world of light? and what are all of them, but a confluence of so many thousand worlds of beauty and brightness, met in one firmament? And, if this floor of thy heavenly palace be thus richly set forth, oh, how infinite glory and magnificence must there needs be within! Thy Chosen Vessel, that had the privilege to be caught up thither, and to see that divine state, whether with bodily or mental eyes, can express it no otherwise, than that it cannot possibly be expressed. No, Lord, it were not infinite, if it could be uttered. Thoughts go beyond words; yet even these come far short also. He, that saw it, says, *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things, which God hath prepared for them that love him.*

SECT. VII.

His Love, in our Redemption from death and hell.

YET is thy love, O Saviour, so much more to be magnified of me, in this purchased glory; when I cast down mine eyes, and look into that horrible gulf of torment and eternal death, whence thou hast rescued my poor soul.

Even out of the greatest contentment which this world is capable to afford unto mankind, to be preferred to the joys of heaven, is an unconceivable advantage; but, from the depth of misery to be raised up unto the highest pitch of felicity, adds so much more to the blessing, as the evil from which we are delivered is more intolerable.

O Blessed Jesu, what a hell is this, out of which thou hast freed me! what dreadful horror is here! what darkness! what confusion! what anguish of souls, that would, and cannot die! what howling, and yelling, and shrieking, and gnashing! what everlasting burnings! what never slaking tortures! what merciless fury of unweariable tormentors! what utter despair of any possibility of release! what exquisiteness, what infiniteness of pains, that cannot, yet must be endured!

O God, if the impotent displeasure of weak men have devised so subtle engines of revenge upon their fellow-mortals, for but petty offences; how can we but think thine infinite justice and wisdom must have ordained such forms and ways of punishment, for heinous sins done against thee, as may be answerable to the violation of thy Divine Majesty? Oh, therefore, the most fearful and deplored condition of damned spirits, never to be ended, never to be abated! Oh, those unquenchable flames; Oh, that burning Tophet, deep and large; and those streams of brimstone, wherewith it is kindled! Oh, that worm ever gnawing and tearing the heart; never dying, never sated! O ever-living death; O ever-renewing torments; O never pitied, never intermitted damnation!

From hence, O Saviour, from hence it is, that thou hast fetched my condemned soul. This is the place, this is the state, out of which thou hast snatched me up into thy heaven. O love and mercy, more deep than those depths, from which thou hast saved me; more high than that heaven, to which thou hast advanced me!

SECT. VIII.

Christ's Love, in giving us the Guard of his Angels.

Now, whereas in my passage from this state of death towards the fruition of immortal glory, I am waylaid by a world of dangers; partly, through my own sinful aptness to miscarriages; and, partly, through the assaults of my spiritual enemies; how hath thy tender love and compassion, O blessed Jesu, undertaken to secure my soul from all these deadly perils; both without, and within: without, by the guardiance of thy blessed angels; within, by the powerful inoperation of thy good Spirit which thou hast given me!

Oh, that mine eyes could be opened, with Elisha's servant, that I might see those troops of heavenly soldiers, those horses and chariots of fire, wherewith thou hast encompassed me! every one of which is able to chase away a whole host of the powers of darkness.

Who am I, Lord, who am I, that, upon thy gracious appointment, these glorious spirits should still watch over me, in mine up-

rising and down lying; in my going out and coming in? that they should bear me in their arms; that they should shield me with their protection? Behold, such is their majesty and glory, that some of thy holiest servants have hardly been restrained from worshipping them: yet, so great is thy love to man, as that thou hast ordained them to be *ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.* Surely, they are in nature far more excellent than man; as being spiritual substances, pure intelligencers, meet to stand before the throne of thee the King of Glory: what a mercy then is this, that thou, who wouldest humble thyself to be lower than they in the susception of our nature, art pleased to humble them in their offices to the guardianship of man, so far as to call them the angels of thy little ones upon earth! How hast thou blessed us; and how should we bless thee, in so mighty and glorious attendants!

SECT. IX.

His Love, in giving us his Holy Spirit.

NEITHER hast thou, O God, merely turned us over to the protection of those tutelary spirits; but hast held us still in thine own hand: having not so strongly defenced us without, as thou hast done within: since that, is wrought by thine angels; this, by the Spirit.

O the sovereign and powerful influences of thy Holy Ghost: whereby we are furnished with all saving graces; strengthened against all temptations; heartened against all our doubts and fears; enabled both to resist and overcome; and, upon our victories, crowned!

O divine bounty, far beyond the reach of wonder! *So God*, the Father, *loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* So God, the Son, loved the world of his elect, that he gave unto them the Holy Spirit of promise; whereby they are sealed unto the day of redemption; whereby, according to the riches of his glory, they are strengthened with might in the inner man; by the virtue whereof shed abroad in their hearts, they are enabled to cry Abba, Father. O gifts; either of which are more worth than many worlds; yet, through thy goodness, O Lord, both of them mine. How rich is my soul, through thy divine munificence; how over-laid with mercies! How safe, in thine Almighty tuition! How happy, in thy blessed possession!

Now, therefore, I dare, in the might of my God, bid defiance to all the gates of hell. Do your worst, O all ye principalities and powers, and rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickednesses in high places; do your worst: God is mine, and I am his: I am above your malice, in the right of him, whose I am. It is true, I am weak; but he is omnipotent: I am sinful; but he is infinite holiness: that power, that holiness, in his gracious application, is mine.

It is my Saviour's love, that hath made this happy exchange, of his righteousness for my sin; of his power, for my infirmity. *Who,*

then, *shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God, that justifieth. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him, that loved us:* so as, *neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Lo where this love is placed: were it our love of God, how easily might the power of a prevalent temptation separate us from it, or it from us! For, alas, what hold is to be taken of our affections; which, like unto water, are so much more apt to freeze, because they have been heated? but it is the love of God to us in Christ Jesus, which is ever as himself, constant and eternal. He can no more cease to love us, than to be himself: he cannot but be unchangeable: we cannot but be happy.

SECT. X.

Our sense and improvement of Christ's Love, in all the former particulars: and, first, in respect of the Inequality of the Persons.

ALL this, O Dear Jesu, hast thou done, all this hast thou suffered, for men. And, oh now for a heart, that may be some ways answerable to thy mercies! Surely, even good natures hate to be in debt for love; and are ready to repay favours with interest.

Oh for a soul sick of love; yea, sick unto death! Why should I, how can I, be any otherwise, any whit less affected, O Saviour? This only sickness is my health: this death is my life: and, not to be thus sick, is to be dead in sins and trespasses. I am rock, and not flesh; if I be not wounded with these heavenly darts. Ardent affection is apt to attract love, even where is little or no beauty; and excellent beauty is no less apt to enflame the heart, where there is no answer of affection: but, when these two meet together, what breast can hold against them? and here they are both in an eminent degree. Thou canst say even of thy poor Church, though labouring under many imperfections, *Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart, with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck: how fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse!* And canst thou, O Blessed Saviour, be so taken with the incurious and homely features of thy faithful ones; and shall not we much more be altogether enamoured of thine absolute and divine beauty? of whom every believing soul can say, *My beloved is white and ruddy; the chiefest among ten thousand: his head is as the most fine gold: his eyes are as the eyes of doves, by the rivers of waters: his cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: his lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh, &c.* It hath pleased thee, O Lord, out of the sweet ravishments of thy heavenly love, to say to thy poor Church, *Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me:* but, oh let me say unto thee, "Turn thine eyes to me, that they may overcome me:" I would be thus ravished,

thus overcome: I would be thus out of myself, that I might be all in thee.

Thou lovedst me, before I had being: let me, now that I have a being, be wholly taken up with thy love: let me set all my soul upon thee, that gavest me being; upon thee, who art the eternal and absolute Self-Being; who hast said, and only could say, *I am that I am.* Alas, Lord, we are nothing, but what thou wilt have us; and cease to be, when thou callest in that breath of life, which thou hast lent us: thou art that incomprehensibly glorious, and infinite self-existing spirit; from eternity, in eternity, to eternity; in and from whom all things are. It is thy wonderful mercy, that thou wouldest condescend so low, as to vouchsafe to be loved of my wretchedness: of whom thou mightest justly require and expect nothing, but terror and trembling. It is my happiness, that I may be allowed to love a Majesty so infinitely glorious. Oh, let me not be so far wanting to my own felicity, as to be less than ravished with thy love.

SECT. XI.

A further enforcement of our Love to Christ, in respect of our Unworthiness and his Sufferings, and prepared Glory.

Thou lovedst me, when I was deformed, loathly, forlorn, and miserable: shall I not now love thee, when thou hast freed me, and decked me with the ornaments of thy graces? Lord Jesu, who should enjoy the fruit of thine own favours, but thyself? How shamefully injurious were it, that, when thou hast trimmed up my soul, it should prostitute itself to the love of the world! Oh, take my heart to thee alone: possess thyself of that, which none can claim but thyself.

Thou lovedst me, when I was a professed rebel against thee; and receivedst me, not to mercy only, but to the endearment of a subject, a servant, a son: where should I place the improvement of the thankful affections of my loyalty and duty, but upon thee?

Thou, O God, hast so loved us, that thou wouldest become the Son of Man, for our sakes; that we, who are the sons of men, might become the sons of God. Oh, that we could put off the man, to put on Christ; that we could neglect and hate ourselves for thee, that hast so dearly loved us, as to lay aside thy heavenly glory for us!

How shall I be vile enough, O Saviour, for thee; who, for my sake, being the Lord of Life and Glory, wouldest take upon thee the shape of a servant! How should I welcome that poverty, which thy choice hath sanctified! How resolutely shall I grapple with the temptations of that enemy, whom thou hast foiled for me! How cheerfully should I pass through those miseries and that death, which thou hast sweetened! With what comfortable assurance shall I look upon the face of that merciful justice, which thou hast satisfied!

But oh, what a blessed inheritance hast thou, in thine infinite love, provided for me! *an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled,*

and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for me: so as, *when* my *earthly house of this tabernacle shall be dissolved, I have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* A house? Yea, a palace of heavenly state and magnificence. Neither is it less than a kingdom, that abides there for me: a kingdom, so much more above these worldly monarchies, as heaven is above this clod of earth.

Now, Lord, what conceits, what affections of mind can be, in the least sort, answerable to so transcendent mercy? If some friend shall have been pleased to bestow some mean legacy upon me, or shall have feoffed me in some few acres of his land, how deeply do I find myself obliged to the love and memory of so kind a benefactor! O then, Lord, how can my soul be capable of those thoughts and dispositions, which may reach to the least proportion of thine infinite bounty; who, of a poor worm on earth, hast made me an heir of the kingdom of heaven?

Woe is me, how subject are these earthly principalities to hazard and mutability, whether through death or insurrection! but this crown, which thou hast laid up for me is immarcescible: and shall sit immovably fast upon my head; not for years, nor for millions of ages, but for all eternity. Oh, let it be my heaven here below, in the mean while, to live in a perpetual fruition of thee; and to begin those hallelujahs to thee here, which shall be as endless as thy mercy, and my blessedness.

SECT. XII.

The improvement of our Love to Christ for the mercy of his Deliverance, of the Tuition of his Angels, of the powerful working of his Good Spirit.

HADST thou been pleased to have translated me from thy former paradise, the most delightful seat of man's original integrity and happiness, to the glory of the highest heaven, the preferment had been infinitely gracious; but, to bring my soul from the nethermost hell, and to place it among the choir of angels, doubles the thank of thy mercy, and the measure of my obligation. How thankful was thy prophet but to an Ebedmelech, that, by a cord and rags let down into that dark dungeon, helped him out of that uncomfortable pit wherein he was lodged: yet, what was there, but a little cold, hunger, stench, closeness, obscurity? Lord, how should I bless thee, that hast fetched my soul from that pit of eternal horror, from that lake of fire and brimstone, from the everlasting torments of the damned; wherein I had deserved to perish for ever? *I will sing of thy power, unto thee, O my strength, will I sing: for God is my deliverer, and the God of my mercy.*

But, O Lord, if yet thou shouldest leave me in my own hands, where were I? how easily should I be robbed of thee, with every temptation? how should I be made the scorn and insultation of men and devils! It is thy wonderful mercy, that thou hast given thine angels charge over me. Those angels, great in power and

glorious in majesty, are my sure, though invisible, guard. O Blessed Jesu, what an honour, what a safety is this, that those heavenly spirits, which attend thy throne, should be my champions! Those, that ministered to thee after thy temptation, are ready to assist and relieve me in mine. They can neither neglect their charge, because they are perfectly holy; nor fail of their victory, because they are, under thee, the most powerful. I see you, O ye Blessed Guardians, I see you, by the eye of my faith, no less truly, than the eye of my sense sees my bodily attendants: I do truly, though spiritually, feel your presence, by your gracious operations, in, upon, and for me: and I do heartily bless my God and yours, for you; and for those saving offices, that, through his merciful appointment, you ever do for my soul.

But, as it was with thine Israelites of old, that it would not content them, that thou promisedst and wouldest send thine angel before, to bring them into the land flowing with milk and honey, unless thy presence, O Lord, should go also along with them; so is it still with me and all thine; wert not thou with and in us, what could thine angels do for us? In thee it is, that they move and are. The same Infinite Spirit, which works in and by them, works also in me. From thee it is, O thou Blessed and Eternal Spirit, that I have any stirrings of holy motions and breathings of good desires, any life of grace, any will to resist, any power to overcome evil. It is thou, O God, *that girdest me with strength unto battle: thou hast given me the shield of thy salvation: thy right-hand hath holden me up: thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies.* Glory and praise be to thee, O Lord, *which always causest us to triumph in Christ; who crownest us with loving kindness and tender mercies;* and hast not held us short of the best of thy favours.

Truly, Lord, hadst thou given us but a mere being, as thou hast done to the lowest rank of thy creatures, it had been more than thou owest us; more than ever we could be able to requite to thy divine bounty: for every being is good; and the least degree of good is far above our worthiness.

But, that to our being thou hast added life, it is yet a higher measure of thy mercy: for, certainly, of thy common favours, life is the most precious.

Yet this is such a benefit as may be had and not perceived; for even the plants of the earth live and feel it not: that to our life, therefore, thou hast made a further accession of sense, it is yet a larger improvement of thy beneficence; for this faculty hath some power to manage life; and makes it capable, to affect those means which may tend to the preservation of it, and to decline the contrary.

But this is no other than the brute creatures enjoy equally with us, and some of them beyond us: that, therefore, to our sense thou hast blessed us with a further addition of reason, it is yet a higher pitch of munificence: for hereby we are men; and, as such, are able to attain some knowledge of thee our Creator, to observe the motions of the heavens, to search into the natures of our fellow-

creatures, to pass judgment upon actions and events, and to transact these earthly affairs to our own best advantage.

But, when all this is done, woe were to us, if we were but men! for our corrupted reason renders us, of all creatures, the most miserable: that, therefore, to our reason thou hast superadded faith; to our nature, grace; and, of men, hast made us Christians; and to us, as such, hast given thy Christ, thy Spirit; and thereby made us, of enemies, sons and heirs, coheirs with Christ of thine eternal and most glorious kingdom of heaven; yea, hast incorporated us into thyself, and made us one spirit with thee our God; Lord, what room can there be possibly, in these strait and narrow hearts of ours, for a due admiration of thy transcendent love and mercy?

I am swallowed up, O God, I am willingly swallowed up, in this bottomless abyss of thine infinite love: and there let me dwell, in a perpetual ravishment of spirit; till, being freed from this clog of earth and filled with the fulness of Christ, I shall be admitted to enjoy that, which I cannot now reach to wonder at, thine incomprehensible bliss and glory which thou hast laid up in the highest heavens for them that love thee, in the blessed communion of all thy Saints and Angels, thy Cherubim and Seraphim, Thrones, Dominions, and Principalities, and Powers; in the beatifical presence of thee, the Ever-Living God, the Eternal Father of Spirits, Father, Son, Holy Ghost, One Infinite Deity in Three, co-essentially, co-eternally, co-equally glorious Persons: To whom be blessing, honour, glory, and power, for ever and ever. Amen. Hallelujah.

SELECT THOUGHTS:

OR

CHOICE HELPS FOR A PIOUS SPIRIT.

A CENTURY OF DIVINE BREATHINGS FOR A RAVISHED SOUL,

BEHOLDING THE EXCELLENCIES OF HER

LORD JESUS.

BY JOSEPH, BISHOP OF NORWICH.

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER

GRACE AND PEACE

IT pleased the All-wise and Holy God, who orders all events to his own glory, to make use of my late Secession for the production of divers, not I hope unprofitable Tractates: wherein I much rejoice, that my declined age, even in that retiredness, might be in any measure serviceable to his Church. Now I send these Select Notions after their fellows; of which, I wish you may find cause to say, with the wedding-guests at Cana, Thou hast reserved the best wine till now.

The intent of this labour is, to put some good thoughts, Reader, into thy mind; which would not otherwise, perhaps, have tendered themselves to thee: such, as I hope may not a little further thee on thy journey to heaven. And if, in my labouring thitherward, I shall, through God's mercy, be a means of forwarding any soul, but some steps up that steep way, how happy am I!

To which purpose, I know no means more effectual, than those Meditations, which conduce to the animation and vigour of Christian practice: such I have propounded to myself as most behoveful and necessary; especially for this age, into which we are fallen; an age of more brain than heart; and that hath almost lost piety, in the chase of some litigious truths. And, surely, had I known how better to have placed my hours, I should gladly have changed my task: but, I must needs say, I have found this employment so useful and proper, as that I have looked upon those Polemical Discourses which have been forced from me, as no better than mere excursions. I wis, it will be long enough, ere we shall wrangle ourselves into heaven: it must be true contrition, pure consciences, holy affections, heavenly dispositions, hearty devotions, sound regeneration, faith working by love, an humble walking with God, that shall help us thither; and, whatsoever may tend to the advancing of any of these gracious works in us, is worthy to be dear and precious.

Such passages, Reader, if thou shalt, according to my hopes, meet with here, bless God with me; and improve them to the best advantage of thy soul. Thus shall our gain be mutual; and our account happy, in the day of the Lord Jesus: in whom, farewell.

From Higham, near Norwich,
Feb. 7, 1647.

SELECT THOUGHTS.

I.

If miracles be ceased, yet marvels will never cease. There is no creature in the world, wherein we may not see enough to wonder at: for there is no worm of the earth, no spire of grass, no leaf, no twig, wherein we may not see the footsteps of a Deity. The best visible creature is Man: now, what man is he, that can make but a hair, or a straw, much less any sensitive creature? So as no less than an infinite power is seen, in every object that presents itself to our eyes. If, therefore, we look only upon the outsides of these bodily substances, and do not see God in every thing, we are no better than brutish; making use merely of our sense, without the least improvement of our faith, or our reason. Contrary then to the opinion of those men, who hold that a wise man should admire nothing, I say, that a man truly wise and good should admire every thing; or rather, that infiniteness of wisdom and omnipotence, which shews itself in every visible object. Lord, what a beast am I, that I have suffered mine eyes to be taken up with shapes, and colours, and quantities; and have not looked deeper at thee, with awful adoration and wonder, in every parcel of thy great creation! Henceforth, let me see nothing, but thee; and look at all visible things, but as the mere shadows of a glorious omnipotence.

II.

Our affections are then only safe and right, when they are deduced from God, and have their rise from heaven. Then only can I take comfort of my love, when I can love my wife, my child, my friend, myself, my pleasures, and whatsoever contentments in God. Thus I may be sure not to offend, either in the object, or measure. No man can, in God, love whom he should not; nor immoderately love whom he should: this holy respect doth both direct and limit him; and shuts up his delights in the conscience of a lawful fruition. The like must be said of our joy, and fear, and grief, and whatever other affection: for we cannot derive our joy from God, if we place it upon any sinful thing, or if we exceed in the measure of things allowed; we cannot fetch our fear from heaven, if it be cowardly and desperate; nor our grief, if it be merely worldly and heartless. And, if our affections do begin from above, they will surely end there; closing up in that God, who is the author and orderer of them. And, such as

our affections are, such will be the whole disposition of the soul, and the whole carriage of our actions: these are the feet of the soul; and, which way the feet walk, the whole man goes. Happy is the man, that can be so far the master of himself, as to entertain no affections but such, as he takes upon the rebound from heaven.

III.

Whence is this delicate scent in the rose and violet? It is not from the root; that, smells of nothing: not from the stalk; that, is as senseless as the root: not from the earth whence it grows, which contributes no more to these flowers, than to the grass that grows by them: not from the leaf: not from the bud, before it be disclosed, which yields no more fragrance than the leaf, or stalk, or root: yet here I now find it: neither is it here, by any miraculous way; but in an ordinary course of nature, for all violets and roses of this kind yield the same redolence: it cannot be, but that it was potentially in that root and stem, from which the flowers proceed; and there placed, and thence drawn, by that Almighty power, which hath given these admirable virtues to several plants, and educes them in his due seasons to these excellent perfections. It is the same hand, that works spiritually in his elect: out of the soil of the renewed heart, watered with the dew of heaven and warmed with the beams of his Spirit, God can and in his own season doth bring forth those sweet odours of grace and holy dispositions, which are most pleasing to himself; and, if those excellencies be so closely lodged in their bosoms, that they do not discover themselves at all times, it should be no more strange to us, than that this rose and violet are not to be found, but in their own months: it is enough, that the same virtue is still in the root, though the flower be vanished.

IV.

A man, that looks at all things through the consideration of eternity, makes no more of a man, than of a flower: that lasts some days; he lasts some years: at their period, both fade. Now, what difference is there to be made, betwixt days and years, in the thoughts of an eternal duration? Herein, therefore, I have a great advantage of a carnal heart. Such a one, bounding his narrow conceits with the present condition, is ready to admire himself and others, for what they have or are; and is therefore dejected, upon every miscarriage: whereas I behold myself, or that man in all his glory, as vanishing; only measuring every man's felicity, by the hopes and interest which he hath in a blessed eternity.

V.

When I am dead and forgotten, the world will be as it is; the same successions and varieties of seasons; the same revolutions of heaven; the same changes of earth and sea; the like occurrents of natural events and human affairs. It is not in my power to alter the course of things, or to prevent what must be. What should I

do: but quietly take my part of the present; and humbly leave the care of the future to that all-wise providence, which ordereth all things, even the most cross events, according to his most holy and just purposes?

VI.

The Scripture is the sun: the Church is the clock, whose hand points us to, and whose sound tells us, the hours of the day. The sun we know to be sure, and regularly constant in his motion: the clock, as it may fall out, may go too fast or too slow. We are wont to look at, and listen to the clock, to know the time of the day; but, where we find the variation sensible, to believe the sun against the clock, not the clock against the sun. As, then, we would condemn him of much folly, that should profess to trust the clock rather than the sun; so we cannot but justly tax the miscredulity of those, who will rather trust to the Church than to the Scripture.

VII.

What marvellous high respects, hath God given to man, above all his other visible creatures! What a house hath he put him into! how gorgeously arched; how richly pavemented! Wherefore serves all the furniture of heaven and earth, but for his use? What delicate provision hath that bountiful hand made for his palate, both of meats and liquors, by land and sea! What rich ornaments hath he laid up for him, in his wardrobe of earth and waters! And wherefore serves the various music of birds, but to please his ear? For, as for the brute creatures, all harmony to them is but as silence. Wherefore serves the excellent variety of flowers, surpassing Solomon in all his glory, but to please his eye? Mere grass is more acceptable to beasts. Yea, what creature, but he, is capable to survey God's wonders in the deep? to contemplate the great fabric of the heavens? to observe the glorious bodies, and regular motions of the sun, moon, stars? And, which exceeds all conceivable mercies, who, but he, is capable of that celestial glory, which is within that beautiful contignation? to be a companion of the blessed angels; yea, to be a limb of the mystical body of the Eternal Son of God, and to partake with him of his everlasting and incomprehensible glory? *Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him?* And, how utterly unworthy are we even of common mercies, if we return not to our God more advantage of glory, than those poor creatures that were made for us, and which cannot in nature be sensible of his favours!

VIII.

How plain is it, that all sensitive things are ordered by an instinct from their Maker! He, that gives them being, puts into them their several dispositions, inclinations, faculties, operations. If we look to Birds; the mavis, the blackbird, the redbreast have throats tuneable to any note; as we daily see they may be taught strains utterly varying from their natural tones: yet they all naturally have the same songs and accents, different from each other, and fully ac-

cording to their own kind; so as every mavis hath the same ditty with his fellows. If we mark the building of their nests, each kind observes its own fashion and materials; some, clay; others, moss, hair, sticks: yea, if their very motions and restings, they are conformed to their own feather; different from others. If to Beasts, they all, untaught, observe the fashions of their several kinds. Galen observes, that, when he was dissecting a she-goat big with young, a kid, then ready to be yeaned, starts out, and walks up and down the room: and, there being in the same place set several vessels of oil, honey, water, milk, the new fallen kid smells at them all; and, refusing the rest, falls to lapping of the milk: whereupon he justly infers, that nature stays not for a teacher. Neither is it other in Flies, and all sorts of the meanest Vermin. All bees build alike; and order the commonwealth of their hive, in one manner: all ants keep their own way, in their housing, journeys, provisions: all spiders do as perfectly and uniformly weave their web, as if they had been apprentices to the trade. The same instincts are seen also in the Rational creatures; although, in most cases, overruled by their higher faculties. What an Infinite Providence then is this we live under, that hath distributed to every creature, as a several form, so several inclinations, qualities, motions, proper to their own kind, and different from other; and keeps them in this constant uniformity and variety, for the delight and contentment of man! O God, that I could be capable of enough wondering at thy great works! that I could be enough humbled, under the sense of my own incapacity! that I could give thee so much more glory, as I find more vileness in myself!

IX.

When I saw my precious watch (now through an unhappy fall grown irregular) taken asunder, and lying scattered upon the workman's shop-board; so as, here lay a wheel, there the balance; here one gimmer, there another; straight my ignorance was ready to think, when and how will all these ever piece together again in their former order? But, when the skilful artisan had taken it a while in hand, and curiously pinned the joints, it now began to return to its wonted shape and constant motion, as if it had never been disordered. How could I chuse but see in this, the just emblem of a distempered Church and State? Wherein, if all seem disjointed, and every wheel laid aside by itself, so as an unknowing beholder would despair of a redress; yet, if it shall please the great Artist of Heaven to put his hand unto it, how soon might it return to a happy resettlement! Even so, Blessed Lord, for thy great mercy's sake, make up the breaches of thy Sion, and repair the ruins of thy Jerusalem.

X.

We are, and we are not, all one man's children. Our bodies once met in one root; but our minds and dispositions do so differ, as if we had never been of kin. One man is so gentle and plausible, that he would fain please all; another is so churlish and

dogged, that he cares not whom he displeases, and hardly can be well pleased with himself: one, so sparing and pinching, that he grudges himself necessaries; another, so vainly lavish, that he cares not how he squanders his estate: one is tenderly pitiful; another, mercilessly cruel: one, religiously devout; another, wildly profane: one, cowardly fearful; another, desperately courageous: one, jovially cheerful and lightsome; another, sad and dumpish, even to stupidity: one, petulant and wanton; another, austerely continent: one, humble, and low-conceited of rich endowments; another, swollen big with a little. He did never read men to purpose, that is too much troubled with the harsh and unpleasing contrariety of humours, which he meets with in the world; and he shall be too unthankful to God, that, finding himself better composed than others, knows not whither to ascribe it; and too neglective of himself, that, finding his own distempered, labours not to rectify it.

XI.

Nature, Law, and Grace divide all the ages of the world. Now, as it is in man, who is a lesser world, that in every day there is a resemblance of his whole life; the morning is his childhood, the mid-way his youth, the evening his old age: so is it in this greater world. The dim break of day was the state of Nature; and this was the nonage of the world, wherein the light of knowledge, both of human and divine things, was but weak and obscure. The sun was risen higher in the state of the Law; but yet not without thick mists and shadows, till the high noon of that true Sun of Righteousness, who personally shone forth to the world: upon whose vertical point began the age of Grace, that still continues; which is the clear afternoon, and full vigour of the world, though now in its sensible declination: after this, there shall be no time, but eternity. These then are they, which both the Prophets and Apostles have styled the last days: not only in respect of the times, that went before them; but in regard, that no time shall follow them. Neither have we reason to boggle at the large latitude of sixteen hundred years: there was neither of the two other periods of age, but were longer than this. Besides, however childhood and youth have their fixed terms which they ordinarily pass not, yet the duration of old age is indefinite. We have, in our youth, known some grey-heads, that have continued vigorous, till we have lived to match them in the colour of their livery. And if this be, as it is, the evening of the world, do we not see much difference of time in the shutting in of the light? A summer's evening, is a winter's day. But, if these were to the Apostles the last days, how can they be other than in the last hour, yea, the last minute unto us? Why do we not put ourselves into a constant expectation of the end of all things, and set ourselves in a meet posture for the receipt of our returning Saviour?

XII.

It is a feeling and experimental expression, that the Apostle

gives of a Christian, That he *looks not on the things which are seen*; 2 Cor. iv. 18. Not that his eyes are so dim as old Isaac's, that he cannot discern them; or, that his inward senses are so stupified, that he cannot judge of their true value: but that, taking an exact view of these earthly things, he descries so much vanity in them, as that he finds them not worthy to be looked at with the full bent of his desires: like as it is not the mere sight of a strange beauty that is forbidden, for a man may as well look upon a fair face as upon a good picture; but a settled and fixed aspect, that feeds the eye, and draws the heart to a sinful concupiscence. Thus doth not the Christian look upon the things that are seen, as making them the full scope and aim of his desires and affections: so far, he takes notice of them, as to make his best, that is lawful and moderate, use of them; not so, as to make them the chief object of his contemplation, the main drift of his cares. It is well observed by St. Basil, that, as there are two contrary ways, the broad and the narrow; so there are two guides, as contrary, Sense and Faith. Sense presents to us the pleasing delights of this world, on the one side; on the other, the present afflictions and persecutions, that attend a good profession: Faith lays before us the glorious things of a future life, and the endless miseries and torments abiding for sinful souls in the world to come. Now, it is not for every one to deny all credit to his sense; alluring him with all present and visible pleasures, and discouraging him with the terror and pain of present and visible afflictions: and to yield himself, hoodwinked, to be led by faith; fore-promising only better things afar off, and fore-admonishing him of dangers, future and invisible. Faith only is that heroical virtue, which makes a man, with a holy contempt, to overlook all the pleasing baits of the world; and, with a brave courage and fortitude, to despise all the menaces and painful inflictions of his present fury. This works our eyes, not to look upon the things, which we cannot but see; the present shews of the world, whether alluring or terrifying. Had Lot but looked back on Sodom; the pleasant plain of Sodom, that lay like the garden of God behind his back; he had never escaped into the mountain. Had the glorious Protomartyr fixed his eyes only upon his persecutors, his heart could not but have failed, to see the fire in their faces, the sparkling of their eyes, the grinding of their teeth, the bending of their brows, the stopping of their ears, their furious running upon him, their violent halings and draggings, and, lastly, a whole volley of stones discharged mortally upon him: he had been utterly daunted with such an impetuosity of death: But he, as not seeing any of this pomp and ostentation of horror, looks up stedfastly to heaven; and there sees, that which might well make him blind to all other visible objects, the heavens open, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and, upon this sight, he shut up his eyes, and slept. The true Christian, then, hath, with holy Job, made a covenant with his eyes, not to look upon, either the cruel insolencies of the raging world with fear and dejectedness, or on the tempting vanities of the world with amorous glances;

but, with a sober and constant resolution, entertains the objects of both kinds. Very justly did Tertullian jeer that heathen philosopher, who pulled out his eyes to avoid concupiscence: and can tell him, that a Christian can hold his eyes; and yet behold beauty, unbewitched; and can be, at once, open-eyed to nature, and blind to lust: and, what the Apostle said of the use, he can practise, of the sight of the world and earthly objects; he can so behold them, as if he beheld them not. How oft have we, in a deep study, fixed our eyes upon that, which we the while thought not upon, neither perceived that we saw! So doth the Christian to these worldly glories, pleasures, profits; while his mind and affections are on *the things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God;* Col. iii. 1. There, Lord, let me behold those things, which cannot yet be seen; but shall, once, in the sight of them, make me blessed. And, let me *not look on the things that are seen: for, the things, that are seen, are temporary; but, the things, which are not seen, are eternal.*

XIII.

There is not more strangeness, than significance, in that charge of the Apostle, That we should *put on the Lord Jesus Christ;* Rom. xiii. 14. Gal. iii. 27. The soul is, as it were, a body: not really and properly so, according to the gross error of Tertullian; but, by way of allusion. This body of the soul, then, may not be naked; but, must be clad: as our first parents were ashamed of their bodily nakedness; and so still are all their, not savage, posterity; so may we of our spiritual. Every sinner is naked: those rags, that he hath, are so far from hiding his nakedness, that they are part of it: his fairest moralities are but glittering sins; and his sins are his nakedness. Aaron *had made Israel naked to their shame;* Exod. xxxii. 25: not so much in that they were stript of their ear-rings, as that they were enwrapped in the sin of idolatry. No marvel, if we run away, and hide us from the presence of God, as our first parents did, while we are guilty to ourselves of our spiritual deformity. As, then, we are bodily naked, when we come into the world; so we are spiritually naked, while we are of the world: neither can it be either safe or comely for us, till we be covered. There is no clothing can fit the soul, but the Lord Jesus Christ: all other robes, in the wardrobe of earth or heaven, are too short, too strait; like those, which the scorn of Hanun put upon David's messengers, reaching but to the hams: for, though the soul of man be finite, the sin of the soul is scarce so; and that sin must be covered, else there can be no safety for the soul; according to that of the Psalmist, *Blessed is he, whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered;* Psalm xxxii. 1. None, therefore, but the robes of an infinite righteousness, can cover the soul so woefully dressed: none, therefore, but the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God blessed for ever, can cover the soul, that it may not appear unrighteous; or can cleanse the soul, that it may not be unrighteous: and, cleansed it must be, ere the Lord Jesus can be put on: we shall wrong his perfect holiness, if we think we can

slip him on, as a case, over our beastly rags. It is with us, as with Joshua the High Priest: the filthy garments must first be taken off; and then the Lord shall say unto us, *Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment;* Zech. iii. 4. We put on a garment, when we apply it all over to our body: so as, that part, which is clothed, appears not; but is defended from the air, and from the eye: if we have truly put on the Lord Jesus, nothing of ours is seen, but Christ is all in all to us: although this application goes yet deeper; for, we so put him on, that we not only put ourselves into him, but also put him into ourselves, by a mutual kind of spiritual incorporation. We put him on, then, upon our intellectual parts; by knowing him, by believing on him: *This is eternal life, to know thee, and whom thou hast sent,* saith our Saviour: and for Faith, no grace doth so sensibly apprehend him, and make him so feelingly ours. We put him on upon our wills and affections; when we take pleasure in him; when we love him, delight in him, and prefer him to our chiefest joy. Thus do we put him on: as our Lord; in our humble and dutiful subjection: as our Jesus; in our faithful affiance: as Christ, the anointed of God; to be our King, in all holy obedience; our Priest, in our willing consecration to him; our Prophet, in our cheerful readiness to be instructed by him. How happy are we, if we be thus decked: we prank up these poor carcasses of ours gaily, with no small expence; and, when we have done, the stuff, or the fashion, or both, wears out to nothing: but, here is a garment that will never be out of fashion; *Jesus Christ yesterday, and to day, and the same for ever;* yea, the same to us: here, we put him on in grace; there, in eternal glory. The Israelites were forty years in the wilderness; yet their shoes not worne, their apparel not impaired; Deut. xxix. 5. but this attire shall not only hold good in the time of our wandering in this desert, but after we are come into the Canaan of glory; and is best, at last. Wherefore do we put on our choicest attire on some high days, but to testify the cheerfulness of our hearts? *Let thy garment be white,* saith the Preacher; *for now God accepteth thy works;* Eccles. ix. 7, 8. Mephibosheth changed not his raiment, since David went out; as one, that would have the sorrow of his heart seen in the neglect of his clothes; although many a one, under a gay coat, hath a heavy heart: but this attire doth not only testify, but make cheerfulness in the soul; *Thou hast given me more joy of heart, than they had in the time that their corn and their wine increased;* Psalm iv. 7: and, *In thy presence is the fulness of joy.* What can this apparel of ours do, but keep us from a blast, or a shower? It is so far from safeguarding the soul, that it, many times, wounds it; and that, to the death. It was one of the main quarrels against the rich glutton, that he was every day clothed in purple and byss; Luke xvi. 19. How many souls shall once wish, that their bodies had been ever, either naked, or clad with hair-cloth! But this array, as it is infinitely rich and beautiful, so it is as surely defensative of the soul; and is no less than armour

of proof against all assaults, all miseries; Eph. vi. 13. What a deal of cost and pains do we bestow upon these wretched bodies of ours, only to make them pleasing and lovely to the eye of some beholders, as miserable, perhaps, as ourselves! and yet, when we have all done, we are, it may be, no better than hard-favoured and unhandsome creatures; and contemptible in those eyes, from whom we desired most approbation. Jezebel, for all her licking, is cast out of the window, and trodden to dirt in the streets. But this robe we cannot wear, and not be amiable in the eyes of the Holiest: *Behold, thou art fair, my beloved; behold, thou art fair, and there is no spot in thee;* Cant. i. 15. Lo, in this case, the apparel makes the man. Neither is it in the power of any spiritual deformity, to make us other than lovely in the sight of our God, while we have Christ put on upon us. Whatever, therefore, become of the outward man, let it be my care, that my soul be vested with my Lord Jesus: so shall I be sure to be safe, rich, amiable, here; and, hereafter, glorious. It was part of our Saviour's Charge upon the Mount, *Take no care what to put on;* but it must be the main care of our lives, how to put on Christ upon our souls. This is the prime stole, wherewith the father of the Prodigal graceth his returned son. The heaven of heavens is not worth such another. When I have once got this on my back, I shall say, though in a contrary sense, with the Spouse in the Canticles, *I have put on my coat, how shall I put it off? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?* Cant. v. 3.

XIV.

With how devout passion, doth the Psalmist call to all the works of the Almighty to praise him! as well supposing, that every creature, even those that have no tongues to speak for themselves, yet have a tongue to praise their Maker: *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth his speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech, where their voice is not heard;* Psalm xix. 1, 2. Neither is the very earth defective in this duty: every plant says, "Look on me, and acknowledge the life, colour, form, smell, fruit, force, that I have, from the power of my Creator:" every worm, and fly, says, "Look on me, and give God the praise of my living, sense, and motion:" every bird says, "Hear me, and praise that God, who hath given me these various feathers, and taught me these several notes:" every beast, while he bellows, bleats, brays, barks, roars, says, "It is God, that hath given me this shape, this sound:" yea, the very mute fishes are, in their very silence, vocal; in magnifying the infinite wisdom and power of him, that made them, and placed them in those watery habitations; *Let every thing that hath breath,* saith the Psalmist, *praise the Lord:* Psalm cl. 5. Yea, the very winds whistle, and the sea roars out, the praise of the Almighty; who both raises and allays them, at pleasure. What a shame were it for man, to whom alone God hath given an understanding heart, a nimble tongue, and articulate language, wherein he can express his rational thoughts, to be wanting to this so uni-

versal devotion; and to be as insensible of the great works of God, as the ground that he treads upon! If others shall be thus unthankfully dumb, yet, *Praise thou the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. While I live, will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises to my God, whilst I have any being;* Psalm ciii. 1. Psalm cxlvi. 2. But, alas, Lord, thou knowest I cannot so much as will to praise thee, without thee: do thou fill my heart with holy desires, and my mouth with songs of thanksgiving.

XV.

It may seem a strange errand, upon which our Saviour tells us he came into the world: *I am come to send fire on the earth;* Luke xii. 49. When the two fervent disciples would have had fire sent down from heaven upon but a Samaritan village, our Saviour rebuked them; and told them, they knew not of what spirit they were: yet here, he makes it his own business, to send fire on earth. Alas, may we think, we have fire too much already! How happy were it rather, if the fire, which is kindled in the world, were well quenched! And what is the main drift of the Prince of Darkness, but fire? if not to send fire down from heaven, upon the inhabitants of the earth; yet, to send the inhabitants of the earth down to the fire of hell. As then we find divers kinds of material fire; celestial, elementary, domestic, artificial, natural: so, there is no less variety of spiritual fires. It was in fiery, cloven tongues, wherein the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles in their Pentecost; Acts ii. 3: and even this fire, did our Saviour come to send down on the earth; John xvi. 7. *Thy word was in me as fire,* saith the Prophet: Jer. v. 14: and, *Did not our hearts burn within us,* said the two disciples, in their walk to Emmaus, *while he talked with us?* Luke xxiv. 32: this fire he also came to send. Heavenly love and holy zeal are fire: *Many waters cannot quench love;* Cant. viii. 7: *My zeal hath consumed me,* saith the Psalmist; Psalm cxix. 139: and these fires our Saviour came to send into the hearts of men. Holy thoughts are no other than the beams of celestial fire: *My heart was hot within me: while I was musing, the fire burned;* Psalm xxxix. 3: and these, we know he sends. *He maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire;* Psalm civ. 4. Heb. i. 7: these he sends forth to the earth, *to minister for them, that shall be heirs of salvation;* Heb. i. 14. Besides these, afflictions and persecutions are fire: *We have passed through fire and water: Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you; as if some strange thing had happened to you;* 1 Pet. iv. 12: and even these are of his sending: *The Lord hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath devoured the foundation thereof;* Lam. iv. 11. There is no evil in the city, but the Lord hath done it: *The Lord hath done that, which he had devised: he hath thrown down, and not pitied:* Lam. ii. 17. But this expression of our Saviour goes yet deeper, and alludes to the effect of separation, which follows upon the fire of our trial. When the lump of ore is put into the furnace, the fire tries the pure metal from the dross; and makes an actual divi-

sion of the one from the other: so doth Christ by his Word and Spirit. Even he, that is the Prince and God of Peace, comes to set division in the world. Surely, there are holy quarrels, worthy of his engagement: for, as the flesh lusteth and warreth against the spirit; so, the spirit fighteth against the flesh: and this duel may well beseem God for the Author, and the Son of God for the setter of it: these second blows make a happy fray. Nothing is more properly compared, than discord, to fire; Judges ix. 20. This, Christ (the first thing he does) sets in every heart: there is all quietness, secure ease, and self-contentment in the soul, till Christ come there. How should it be other, when Satan sways all without resistance? But, when once Christ offers to enter, there are straight civil wars in the soul, betwixt the old man and the new; and it fares with the heart, as with a house divided in itself, wherein the husband and the wife are at variance: nothing is to be heard, but unquiet janglings, open brawlings, secret opposition: the household takes part, and professes a mutual vexation. This spiritual self-division, wherever it is, though it be troublesome, yet it is cordial: it puts the soul into the state of Rebekah's womb; which, barren, yielded no pain; but, when an Esau and Jacob were conceived and struggling within, yielded, for the time, no ease: yet this was that, which caused her just joy, That she had not so much children, as nations in her womb; even so the trouble of this inward conflict is abundantly requited with the joy of this assurance, That now Christ is come into our soul, and is working his own desired ends in and upon us. Let vain and sensual hearts please themselves in their inward peace and calmness: there cannot be a greater sign of gracelessness and disfavour of God: *When they shall say Peace, Peace; then shall come upon them sudden destruction.* The old word was, "No safety in war:" here, it is contrary. It is this intestine war of the heart, with fire and sword to our corruptions, that must bring us true rest, for the present; and, hereafter, eternal peace and happiness. Now, Lord, since it is thy desire, that this fire should be kindled, kindle thou and enflame my heart with a fervent desire and endeavour, that this thy desire may be accomplished in me. Set me at war with myself, that I may be at peace with thee.

XVI.

In all that we have to do with God, he justly requires and expects from us an awful disposition of heart towards his infiniteness. Hereupon it was, that he delivered his Law in thunder, fire, smoke, and all dreadful magnificence; and when, upon the same day, he would send down his Spirit for the propagation of the Gospel, it was done with an astonishing Majesty; with a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind; and with the apparition of cloven and fiery tongues; Acts ii. 2, 3. And, as it was thus in the descent of the Holy Ghost in the miraculous gifts, so it is in the sanctifying graces: seldom ever doth God by them seize upon the heart, but with a vehement concussion going before. That of St. Paul's conversion was extraordinary and miraculous; but, in some degree,

it is thus in every soul: we are struck down first, and are made sensible of our spiritual blindness, ere our full call be accomplished. As it was with Elijah in the Mount of Horeb, there came first a strong wind, that tore the rocks and mountains; and, after that, an earthquake; then, a fire; before the still small voice: so it is usually in our breasts; ere the comfortable voice of God's Spirit speak to our hearts, there must be some blusterings and flashes of the Law. It is our honour and his favour, that we are allowed to love God: it is our duty to fear him. We may be too familiar, in our love: we cannot be too awful, in our fear.

XVII.

All valuations of these outward things are arbitrary, according to the opinion of their pleasure or their rarity, or the necessity of their use. Did not men's minds set a price upon metals, what were they better than some other entrails of the earth; or one better than other? If, by public law, the Mint were ordained to be only supplied by our Stannaries, how currently would they pass, for more precious than silver mines! To an Indian, a bracelet of worthless beads is estimated above his gold: a hungry Esau values a mess of pottage above his birth-right. In the siege of Samaria, an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and a cab of doves' dung for five pieces; 2 Kings vi. 25. We have heard, that those of Angola have valued a dog at the price of many slaves. In all these earthly commodities, the market rises and falls, according to conceit and occasion; neither is there any intrinsical and settled worth in any of them: only spiritual things, as virtue and grace, are good in themselves; and so carry their infinite value in them, that they make their owner absolutely rich and happy. When, therefore, I see a rich man hugging his bags and admiring his wealth, I look upon that man with pity; as knowing the poorness of that pelf, wherein he placeth his felicity: neither can I behold him with other eyes, than those, wherewith a discreet European sees a savage Indian priding himself in those trifles, which our children have learned to contemn. On the other side, when I see a man rich in the endowments of mind, well fraught with knowledge, eminent in goodness, and truly gracious, I shall rise up to that man, how homely soever his outside be; as the most precious and excellent piece, which this world can afford.

XVIII.

Should I but see an angel, I should look, with Manoah, to die no other death, than the sight of that glory: and yet, even that angel is fain to hide his face, as not able to behold the Infinite Majesty of God his Creator. When Moses did but talk with God in the Mount for forty days, his face did so shine, that the Israelites could not look upon the lustre of his countenance: even the very presence of the Divine Majesty not only hath, but communicates glory. Lord, that I could see but some glimpse of the reflection

of those glorious beams of thine upon my soul! how happy should I be in this vision, whose next degree is perfectly beatifical!

XIX.

As good, so evil, is apt to be communicative of itself: and this, so much more, as it meets with subjects more capable of evil than good. The breath of a plague-sick man taints the air round about him: yea, the very sight of blear eyes infects the sound; and one yawning mouth stretcheth many jaws. How many have we known, that have been innocent in their retiredness, miserably debauched with lewd conversation! Next to being good, is, to consort with the virtuous. It is the most merciful improvement of a holy power, to separate the precious from the vile: it is the highest praise of a constant goodness, for a Lot to be righteous in the midst of Sodom.

XX.

We are all apt to put off the blame of our miscarriages from ourselves. Even in paradise we did so: *It was the woman*, saith Adam: *It was the serpent*, saith the woman. How have we heard fond gamesters cast the blame of their ill luck upon the standers by; which intermeddled nothing, but by a silent eye-sight! So the idolatrous Pagans of old, though flagitiously wicked; yet could impute their public judgments to none but the Christians, whose only innocence was their protection from utter ruin. So foolishly partial doth our self-love render us to our own demerits, that all are guilty save ourselves. Yea, rather than we will want shifts, our very stars shall be blamed; which are no more accessary to our harms, than our eyes are to the eclipses of their most eminent lights. As, on the contrary, we are ready to arrogate unto ourselves those blessings, which the mere bounty of Divine Providence hath cast upon us; whereto we could not contribute so much as a hand to receive them, but by the mercy of the Giver. It cannot be well with me, till I have learned to correct this palpable injustice in both: challenging to myself all my errors, and guilt of sufferings; and yielding to God the praise of his own free and gracious beneficence.

XXI.

How profitable and beneficial a thing is affliction; especially to some dispositions, more than other! I see some trees, that will not thrive, unless their roots be laid bare; unless, besides pruning, their bodies be gashed and sliced: others, that are too luxuriant, except divers of their blossoms be seasonably pulled off, yield nothing. I see too rank corn, if it be not timely eaten down, may yield something to the barn, but little to the granary. I see some full bodies, that can enjoy no health without strong evacuations, blood-lettings, fontinels. Such is the condition of our spiritual part: it is a rare soul, that can be kept in any constant order, without these smarting remedies: I confess mine cannot: how wild had I run, if the rod had not been over me! Every

man can say he thanks God for ease: for me, I bless God for my troubles.

XXII.

When I consider what an insensible atom man is, in comparison of the whole body of the earth; and what a mere centre-point the earth is, in comparison of the vast circumference of heaven; and what an almost infinite distance there is betwixt this point the earth, and that large circle of the firmament; and, therewithal, think of the innumerable number, and immense greatness of those heavenly luminaries: I cannot but apprehend how improbable it is, that those stars should, at such a distance, distinguish betwixt one man and another; betwixt one limb of the same body and another; betwixt one spot of earth and another; and, in so great a mixture and confusion of influences, should give any distinct intimation of particular events in nature, and much more of mere contingencies of arbitrary affairs. As for the moon, by reason of her vicinity to the earth, and sensible predominance over moisture; and for the sun, the great magazine of light and heat; I acknowledge their powerful, but unpartial, operations upon this whole globe of earth and waters, and every part of it, not without just wonder and astonishment: the other stars may have their several virtues and effects; but their marvellous remoteness, and my undiscernible nothingness, may seem to forbid any certain intelligence of their distinct workings upon me. But, whether these glorious lights give or take any notice of such an imperceptible mite as I; sure I am, there is great reason I should take notice of them; of their beauteous lustre, of their wonderful magnitude, of their regular motion; and be transported with admiration of that omnipotent power, wisdom, providence, which created this goodly and mighty host of heaven; and guides them in their constant march, without the least deviation, from their first setting out to the last moment of their final conflagration. Oh, the narrowness of my wretched heart, that affords not room enough for wonder at that, which I cannot but see!

XXIII.

It becomes not us to be niggardly, where our Saviour intends bounty. How glad should we be rather to ampliate the benefit of the great work of our Redeemer! But, surely, I cannot see upon what warrant that favour is grounded, that enlargeth the fruit of Christ's redemption to the angels: the good needed it not; the evil were not capable of it: only mankind was captived, and redeemable by that invaluable ransom. Doubtless, those blessed spirits have their part in the joy and gratulation of the infinite mercy of our deliverance: for, if they rejoice at the conversion of one sinner, what triumph do we think there is in heaven at the universal redemption of all believers! The propriety of this favour hath reason to engage us so much the more. Lord, thy mercy is free and boundless: thou wouldest pass by the lapsed angels, and leave them in their sin and their chains; and only rescue miserable man out of their hell. Oh, for a heart, that might be, in some

measure, answerable to so infinite mercy; and that might be no less captived to thy love, than it is freed by thy redemption!

XXIV.

Men do commonly wrong themselves, with a groundless expectation of good; fore-promising to themselves all fair terms in their proceedings, and all happy success in the issue; boding nothing to themselves, but what they wish. Even the man after God's own heart could say, *In my prosperity I said*, tush, *I shall never be removed;* Psalm xxx. 6: wherein their misreckoning makes their disappointment so much the more grievous. Had not David made such account of the strength and stability of his mountain, it could not have so much troubled him to have it levelled with the plain. On the contrary, the evils, which we look for, fall so much the less heavily, by how much we are fore-prepared for their entertainment. Whatever by-accidents I may meet withal besides, I have two fixed matches, that I must inevitably encounter with, age and death: the one is attended with many inconveniences; the other, with much horror. Let me not flatter myself, with hopes of jollity and ease. My comforts for heaven shall, I trust, never fail me: but, for the present world, it shall be well for me, if I can, without too much difficulty, scramble out of the necessary miseries of life; and, without too much sorrow, crawl to my grave.

XXV.

Heaven hath many tongues, that talk of it; more eyes, to behold it; but few hearts, that rightly affect it. Ask any Christian, especially, whom ye shall meet with, he will tell you, thither he shapes his course; there he hath pitched his hopes; and would think himself highly wronged by that man, who should make doubt of either his interest or speed: but, if we shall cast our eyes upon the lives of men, or they reflect their eyes upon their own bosoms, the hypocrisy will too palpably discover itself; for, surely, which way soever the faces look, the hands and feet of the most men move hellward. If malice, fraud, cruelty, oppression, injustice, excess, uncleanness, pride, contention, covetousness, lies, heresies, blasphemies, disobedience be the way thither, woe is me, how many walk in that wide and open road to destruction! But even there, where the heart pretends to innocence, let a man strictly examine his own affections, he shall find them so deeply earthed, that he shall be forced to confess his claim to heaven is but fashionable. Ask thyself but this one question, O man, whatsoever thou art, ask it seriously: "Might I this very hour go to heaven, am I willing and desirous, to make a present change of this life for a better?" and tell me sincerely, what answer thou receivest from thine own heart. Thy judgment cannot but tell thee, that the place is a thousand times better; that the condition would be infinitely advantageous, to exchange baseness for glory, misery for blessedness, time for eternity, a living death for a life immortal. If thou do now fumble, and shuffle, and demur upon the resolu-

tion, be convinced of thine own worldliness and infidelity: and know, that if thy heart had as much of heaven as thy tongue, thou couldst not but say, with the Chosen Vessel, *I desire to depart hence, and to be with Christ, which is far better;* Phil. i. 23.

XXVI.

There is no earthly pleasure, whereof we shall not soon grow weary; and be as willing to intermit, as ever we were to entertain it: and, if the use of it continue, the very frequency makes it disregarded; so as, that, which at first we esteemed rare and precious, is now looked upon as common and despicable: and, if it be such, as that our impetuous affection is too much transported with a present fruition, we are so much the more distempered in the loss. On the contrary, those painful yokes, which, at the first imposing seemed insupportable, grow tolerable by custom and long acquaintance: so as, I know not how it comes to pass, that time hath a contrary power, both to aggravate and lighten evils. Those pleasures are only worthy to carry our hearts, which are measured by no less than eternity; and those pains most justly formidable, which know neither end nor remission.

XXVII.

The nearer our Saviour drew to his glory, the more humility he expressed. His followers were first his Servants, and he their Master; John xiii. 16: then, his Disciples, and he their Teacher; John xv. 8: soon after, they were his Friends, and he theirs; John xv. 14: straightways after his resurrection and entrance into an immortal condition, they were his Brethren; *Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father;* John xx. 17: lastly, they are incorporated into him, and made partakers of his glory, *That they also may be one with us,* saith he, *I in them, and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one; and the glory, which thou gavest me, I have given them;* John xvii. 21, 22, 23. O Saviour, was this done for the depressing of thyself, or for the exaltation of us, or rather for both? How couldest thou more depress thyself, than thus to match thyself with us poor wretched creatures? How couldest thou more exalt us, than to raise us unto this entireness with thee, the All-Glorious and Eternal Son of God? How should we learn of thee, to improve our highest advancement to our deepest humility; and so to regard each other, that, when we are greatest, we should be least!

XXVIII.

How apt are we to misconstrue the Spirit of God, to our own disadvantage! While the blessed Apostle bids us to *work out* our *salvation with fear and trembling*, he doth not bid us to work it out with doubt and distrust. It is the Psalmist's charge, that we should *serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice in him with trembling;* Psalm ii. 11: so as there is a fear without diffidence, and a trembling that may consist with joy: trembling is an effect of fear; but this fear, which we must affect, is reverential, not slavish, not dis-

trustful. Indeed, when we look upon ourselves, and consider our own frailties and corruptions and God's infinite justice, we have too just cause of doubt and dejection; yea, were it not for better helps, of utter despair: but, when we cast up our eyes to the power of him that hath undertaken for us, and the faithfulness of him that hath promised, and the sure mercies of him that hath begun his good work in us; we can fear with confidence, and rejoice in our trembling. For, what are our sins, to his mercies; our unworthiness, to his infinite merits; our weaknesses, to his omnipotence? I will therefore so distrust myself, that I will be stedfastly confident in the God of my salvation: I will so tremble before the glorious Majesty of my God, that I may not abate of the joy of his never-failing mercy.

XXIX.

What a large and open hand hath our God! How infinitely doth his bounty transcend, not the practice only, but the admiration of man! We think it well, if, upon often asking, we can receive small favours; if, after long delay, we can be gratified with a condescent; and, if we have received one courtesy, that is a bar to a second: whereas, our munificent God gives us, not only what we ask, but what we ask not; and, therefore, before we ask. Yea, it is he, that gives us to ask: neither could we so much as crave good things, if he did not put into us those holy desires. Yea, he not only gives us blessings, before we ask; but he gives us the best things, a right to eternal glory, before we are at all; yea, before the world was. And, as he prevents us in time, so he exceeds our thoughts in measure, giving us more than we ask: Rachel would have a son; God gives her two: Abraham sues that Ishmael may live; God gives him to prosper, and to be the father of many princes. Yet more, he gives us what we cannot ask: the dumb Demoniac could not sue for himself: his very silence was vocal; and receives what he would, and could not request. Yea, lastly, which is the great improvement of his mercy, he gives us against our asking! our ignorance sues against ourselves; requiring hurtful things; he will not suffer our hearts and tongues to wrong us; but withholds what we unfitly crave, and gives us what we should, and do not crave: as the fond child cries to his father for a knife; he reaches him a spoon, that may feed, and not hurt him. O the ocean of divine bounty, boundless, bottomless! O our wretched unworthiness, if we be either niggardly to ourselves, in not asking blessings; or unthankful to our God, in not acknowledging them.

XXX.

Infidelity and faith look both through the same perspective glass; but at contrary ends. Infidelity looks through the wrong end of the glass; and therefore sees those objects which are near afar off, and makes great things little; diminishing the greatest spiritual blessings, and removing far from us threatened evils: faith looks at the right end; and brings the blessings that are far off in time

close to our eye; and multiplies God's mercies, which, in a distance, lost their greatness. Thus, the faithful saw his seed possessed of the promised land, when as yet he had no seed, nor was likely to have any; when the seed, which he should have, should not enjoy it till after four hundred years. Thus, that good patriarch saw Christ's day, and rejoiced. Thus, our first parent comforted himself after his ejection out of paradise, with the foresight of that blessed seed of the woman, which should be exhibited almost four thousand years after. Still, and ever, faith is like itself. What use were there of that grace, if it did not fetch home to my eye things future and invisible? That this dissolved body shall be raised out of the dust; and enlived with this very soul, wherewith it is now animated; and both of them put into a condition eternally glorious; is as clearly represented to my soul in this glass, as if it were already done. *Faithful is he, that hath promised; which will also do it.*

XXXI.

Who can think other than with scorn, of that base and unworthy conceit, which hath been entertained by some, that our Saviour lived here on earth upon alms? He, that vouchsafed to take upon him the shape of a servant, would have hated to take upon him the trade of a beggar: service is a lawful calling; beggary, not so. He, that gave life to all creatures, could take a maintenance from them without asking. He, that did command the fish to bring the tribute-money for himself and his disciples, and could multiply a few loaves and fishes for the relief of thousands, could rather raise a sustenance to himself and his, than beg it. But here was neither need, nor cause: even ordinary means failed not: many wealthy followers, who had received cures and miraculous deliverances, besides heavenly doctrine, from him, ministered to him of their substance; Luke viii. 2, 3. Neither was this out of charity, but out of duty: in the charge, which he gave to his disciples, when he sent them by pairs to preach abroad, he tells them the labourer is worthy of his wages; and can we think this rule doth not much more hold concerning himself? Had not himself and his family been furnished with a meet stock raised from hence, what purse was it, which Judas bore? and how could he be a thief in his office, if his bags were empty? He, therefore, that could say, *It is a more blessed thing to give, than to receive;* certainly would not choose, when it was in his power, rather to receive than give. *The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof;* and he distributes it, as he pleaseth, amongst the children of men. For me, I hope I shall have the grace, to be content with whatsoever share shall fall to my lot; but my prayer shall be, that I may beg of none but God.

XXXII.

What a madness it is in us, to presume on our interest in God's favour, for the securing of our sinfulness from judgment! The angels were deeper in it, than we mortals can ever hope to be, in these houses of clay; yet, long since, are ugly devils: and they,

which enjoyed the liberty of the glorious heavens, are now reserved in everlasting chains of darkness. And, if we look down upon earth, what darling had God in the world, but Israel? This was his firstborn, his lot, his inheritance; of whom he said, *Here I have a delight to dwell.* And now, where is it? Oh, the woeful desolations of that select people! What is it, to tell of the suffossion of her vineyards? Psalm lxxx. 13: vastation of her tents? Jer. iv. 20: the devouring of her land? Isaiah i. 7: demolition of walls? Psalm lxxxix. 40: breaking down altars? Isaiah xxvii. 9: burning of cities? spoiling of houses; dashing in pieces their children; ravishing their wives? Isaiah xiii. 16: killing of their priests? Psalm lxxviii. 64: eating of their own children of but a span long? Lam. ii. 20: and a thousand such woeful symptoms of war? the Psalmist hath said a word for all (in a just, but contrary sense) *Destructions are come to a perpetual end:* what destruction can be more, when there is no Israel? How is that wretched nation vanished, no man knows whither! So, as it was Jezebel's curse, that nothing was left, whereof it could be said, "This was Jezebel;" so, there is not one piece of a man left in all the world, of whom we can say, "This was of one of the tribes of Israel." As for those famous Churches, which were, since that, honoured with the preaching and pens of the blessed Apostles, where are they now to be looked for, but amongst the rubbish of our cursed Mahometism? Oh, that we could not be high-minded, but fear!

XXXIII.

What a woeful conversion is here! The sting of death is sin, and the sting of sin is death: both meet in man, to make him perfectly miserable. Death could not have stung us, no, could not have been at all, if it had not been for sin: and sin, though in itself extremely heinous, yet were not so dreadful and horrible, if it were not attended with death. How do we owe ourselves to the mercy of a Saviour, that hath freed us from the evil of both! having pulled out the sting of death, which is sin, that it cannot hurt us; and having taken such order with the sting of sin, which is death, that, instead of hurting, it shall turn beneficial to us. Lord, into what a safe condition hast thou put us! If neither sin nor death can hurt us, what should we fear?

XXXIV.

How unjustly hath the presumption of blasphemous cavillers been wont, to cast the envy of their condemnation merely upon the absolute will of an unrespective power! as if the damnation of the creature were only of a supreme will, not of a just merit. The very name of Justice convinces them: a punitive justice cannot but suppose an offence. It is not for us, to rack the brains and strain the heart-strings of plain honest Christians, with the subtleties of distinctions, of a negative and positive reprobation, of causes and consequences; truths, meet for the Schools: it is enough, that all Christian Divines, the Synods both of Dort and Trent, agree in this truth, That never man is, was, can be miserable, but for sin;

yea, for his own sin. The Prophet tells us so in terms: *Why is the living man sorrowful? man suffereth for his sin;* Lam iii. 39. Nothing can be more true, than that of Bildad the Shuhite, *Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man;* Job. viii. 20. *Thy perdition is of thyself, O Israel.* It is no less than rank blasphemy, to make God the author of sin: *Thou art the God, that hast no pleasure in wickedness; neither shall any evil dwell with thee,* saith the Psalmist; Psalm v. 4. Our sin is our own; and the wages of sin is death: he, that doth the work, earns the wages. So then, the righteous God is cleared, both of our sin and our death: only his justice pays us, what we will needs deserve: *Have I any pleasure at all,* saith he, *that the wicked should die; and not that he should return from his ways and live? wherefore return ye, and live;* Ezek. xviii. 23, 32. What a wretched thing is a wilful sinner, that will needs be guilty of his own death! Nothing is more odious amongst men, than for a man to be a felon of himself: besides the forfeiture of his estate, Christian burial is denied him; and he is cast forth into the highway, with a stake pitched through his body; so as every passenger, that sees that woeful monument, is ready to say, "There lies the carcase, but where is the soul?" But, so much more heinous is the self-felony of a wilful sinner, because it is immediately acted upon the soul; and carries him, with pleasure, in the ways of an eternal death. O Lord, *cleanse thou me from my secret faults: keep thy servant also from presumptuous sins, lest they get the dominion over me;* Psalm xix. 12, 13.

XXXV.

We are wont to say, That we ought to give even the Devil his due: and, surely, it is possible for us, to wrong that Malignant Spirit; in casting upon him those evils, which are not properly his. It is true, that he is the Tempter; and both injects evil motions, and draws them forth into act: but yet, all ill is not immediately his; we have enough besides of our own. *Every man,* saith St. James, *is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed: then, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death;* James i. 14, 15. Lo, both the lust and the seducement are our own: the sin is ours; the death, ours. There are, indeed, diabolical suggestions, which are immediately cast into us by that Wicked One; but there are carnal temptations, that are raised out of our own corrupt nature: these need not his immediate hand. He was the main agent in our depravation; but, being once depraved, we can act evil of ourselves. And, if Satan be the father of sin, our will is the mother; and sin is the cursed issue of both. He could not make our sin without ourselves: we concur, to our own undoing. It was the charge of the Apostle, that we should not *give place to the Devil:* lo, he could not take it, unless we gave it: our will betrays us to his tyranny: in vain, shall we cry out of the malice and fraud of wicked spirits, while we nourish their 'complices in our bosoms.

XXXVI.

I cannot but think, with what unspeakable joy old Simeon died, when, after long waiting for the consolation of Israel, he had now seen the Lord's Christ; when I hear him say, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* Methinks, I should see his soul ready to fly out of his mouth, in a heavenly ravishment; and, even then, upon its wing towards its glory: for now, his eyes saw, and his arms embraced, in God's salvation his own, in Israel's glory his own. How gladly doth he now see death, when he hath the Lord of Life in his bosom! Or how can he wish to close up his eyes, with any other object? Yet, when I have seriously considered it, I cannot see wherein our condition comes short of his. He saw the child Jesus but in his swathing bands; when he was but now entering upon the great work of our redemption: we see him, after the full accomplishment of it, gloriously triumphing in heaven. He saw him but buckling on his armour; and entering into the lists: we see him victorious; *Who is this, that cometh from Edom; with dyed garments from Bozrah? this, that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save?* Isaiah lxiii. 1. He could only say, *To us a child is born, to us a son is given;* Isaiah ix. 6: we can say, *Thou hast ascend-d on high; thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men;* Psalm lxviii. 18. It is true, the difference is, he saw his Saviour with bodily eyes; we, with mental: but the eyes of our faith are no less sure and unfailing, than those of sense. Lord, why should not I, whose eyes have no less seen thy salvation, say, Now let thy servant depart, not in peace only, but in a joyful sense of my instant glory?

XXXVII.

When I think on my Saviour, in his agony, and on his cross, my soul is so clouded with sorrow, as if it would never be clear again: those bloody drops, and those dreadful ejaculations, methinks, should be past all reach of comfort: but when I see his happy eluctation out of these pangs, and hear him cheerfully rendering his spirit into the hands of his Father; when I find him trampling upon his grave, attended with glorious angels, and ascending in the chariot of a cloud to his heaven; I am so elevated with joy, as that I seem to have forgotten there was ever any cause of grief in those sufferings. I could be passionate to think, O Saviour, of thy bitter and ignominious death; and, most of all, of thy vehement strugglings with thy Father's wrath for my sake: but thy conquest, and glory, takes me off, and calls me to Hallelujahs of joy and triumph: *Blessing, honour, glory, and power be unto him, that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever;* Rev. v. 13.

XXXVIII.

It is not hard to observe, that the more holy any person is, the more he is afflicted with others' sin. Lot vexed his righteous soul,

with the unclean conversation of the Sodomites: David's eyes gushed out rivers of water, because men kept not the Law. Those, that can look with dry and undispleased eyes upon another's sin, never truly mourned for their own: had they abhorred sin, as sin, the offence of a God would have been grievous to them, in whomsoever. It is a godless heart, that doth not find itself concerned in God's quarrel; and that can laugh at that, which the God of Heaven frowns at. My soul is nearest to me; my sorrow, therefore, for my sin must begin at home: but it may not rest there: from thence it shall diffuse itself all the world over: *Who is offended, and I burn not?* 2 Cor. xi. 29. who offendeth, and I weep not?

XXXIX.

The world little considers the good advantage, that is made of sins. Surely, the whole Church of God hath reason to bless God for Thomas his unbelief: not in the act, which was odious, after so good assurances; but, in the issue. His doubt proves our evidence; and his confession, after his touch had convinced him, was more noble, than his incredulity was shameful. All his attendance upon Christ had not taught him so much divinity, as this one touch. Often had he said, *My Lord;* but never, *My God,* till now. Even Peter's confession, though rewarded with the change of his name, came short of this. The flame, that is beaten down by the blast of the bellows, rises higher than otherwise it would; and the spring-water, that runs level in the plain, yea if it fall low, it will therefore rise high: the shaken tree roots the deeper. Not that we should *sin, that grace may abound; God forbid:* he can never hope to be good, that will be therefore ill, that he may be the better: but, that our holy zeal should labour to improve our miscarriages, to our spiritual gain; and the greater glory of that Majesty, whom we have offended. To be bettered by grace, it is no mastery; but to raise more holiness out of sin, is a noble imitation of that holy God, who brings light out of darkness, life out of death.

XL.

Every man bests knows his own complaints: we look upon the outsides of many, whom we think happy; who, in the mean time, are secretly wrung with the inward sense of their own concealed sorrows; and, under a smooth and calm countenance, smother many a tempest in their bosom: there are those, whose faces smile, while their conscience gripes them closely within: there are those, that can dissemble their poverty and domestic vexations, reserving their sighs till their back be turned; that can pick their teeth abroad, when they are fasting and hungry at home: and many a one forces a song, when his heart is heavy: no doubt, Naomi made many a short meal, after her return to Bethlehem; yet did not whine to her great kindred, in a bemoaning of her want: and good Hannah bit in many a grief, which her insulting rival might not see. On the contrary, there are many, whom we pity as miserable, that laugh in their sleeve; and applaud themselves in their secret felicity; and would be very loth to exchange conditions, with those, that

commiserate them: a ragged cynic likes himself, at least as well as a great Alexander: the mortified Christian, that knows both worlds, looks with a kind of contented scorn upon the proud gallant that contemns him; as feeling that heaven within him, which the other is not capable to believe. It is no judging of men's real estate, by their semblance; nor valuing others' worth, by our own rate. And, for ourselves, if we have once laid sure grounds of our own inward contentment and happiness, it matters not greatly, if we be misknown of the world.

XLI.

For one man to give titles to another, is ordinary; but, for the great God to give titles to a poor wretched man, is no less than wonderful. Thus doth the Lord to Job: *There is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man.* Oh, what must he needs be, in whom his Maker glories! Lo, who would have looked for a Saint, in so obscure a corner of the East; and in so dark a time, before ever the Law gave light to the world? yet, even then, the land of Uz yields a Job. No time, no place can be any bar to an infinite mercy. Even this while, for ought I see, the sun shined more bright in Midian, than in Goshen. God's election will be sure to find out his own, any where out of hell; and, if they could be there, even there also. Amongst all those idolatrous heathen, Job is perfect and upright: his religion, and integrity, is so much the more glorious, because it is so ill-neighboured; as some rich diamond is set off by a dark foil. Oh, the infinite goodness of the Almighty, that picks out some few grains out of the large chaff-heap of the world, which he reserves for the granary of a blessed immortality! *It is not of him that willeth, nor in him that runneth; but of God, that hath mercy.* We might well imagine, that such a sprig must sprout out of the stock of faithful Abraham. What other loins were likely to yield so holy an issue? And, if his Sarah must be the mother of the promised seed, yet why might he not also raise a blessed seed from Keturah? The birth doth not always follow the belly: even this second brood yields an heir of his father's faith: it is said, That *to the sons of the concubines Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away to the east;* Gen. xxv. 6. Surely, this son of the concubine carries away as rich a legacy of his father's grace, as ever was enjoyed by the son of the promise at home. The gifts, that Abraham gave to Midian, were nothing to those gifts, which the God of Abraham gives to the son of Midian; who *was perfect and upright, one that feared God and eschewed evil.* I perceive the holy and wise God meant to make this man a pattern; as of patience, so of all heavenly virtues: he could not be fit for that use, if he were not exquisite; and what can be wanting to that man, of whom God holily boasts that he is perfect? And now, what metal is so fit to challenge the fire of affliction, as this pure gold? and who is so fit a match for the great adversary, as this champion of God? Never had he been put upon so hard a combat, if God had not well known, both the strength that he had given him, and the happy success of his conflict. Little doth that good man know what wager is laid on his head; but strongly encounters all his trials. The Sabeans have bereft him of his oxen;

the Chaldees, of his camels; the fire from heaven, of his sheep; the tempest, of his children; Satan, of his health; and, had not his wife been left to him for his greatest cross, and his friends for his further tormentors, I doubt whether they had escaped. Lo, there sits the great Potentate of the East, naked and forlorn in the ashes; as destitute of all comforts, as full of painful boils and botches; scraping his loathsome hide with a potsherd: yet, even in that woeful posture, possessing his soul in patience; maintaining his innocence; justifying his Maker; cheering himself in his Redeemer; and happily triumphing over all his miseries; and, at last, made the great mirror of divine bounty to all generations. Now, must Job pray for his friendly persecutors; and is so high in favour with God, that it is made an argument of extreme wrath against Israel, that though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in the land, they should deliver none but their own souls; Ezek. xiv. 14, 20. O God, this Saint could not have had this strength of invincible patience, without thee: thou, that rewardest it in him, didst bestow it upon him: it is thy great mercy, to crown thine own works in us: thy gifts are free: thou canst fortify even my weak soul with the same powers: strengthen me with the same grace, and impose what thou wilt.

XLII.

As it shall be once in glory, so it is in grace; there are degrees of it. The Apostle, that said of his auditors, they have received the Holy Ghost as well as we, did not say, they have received the Holy Ghost as much as we. We know the Apostles had so much, as to give it to others: none, besides them, could do so. It is a happy thing, to have any quantity of true sanctifying grace at all: every drop of water is water, and every grain of gold is gold; every measure of grace is precious. But, who is there, that, when he is dry, would take up with one drop of liquor, when he might have more? or, if covetously minded, would sit down content with one dram of gold? in such cases, a little doth but draw on a desire of more. It is strange to see, that, in all other commodities, we desire a fulness: if God give us fruit of our bodies, it contents us not to have an imperfect child, but we wish it may have the full shape and proportion; and, when God hath answered us in that, we do not rest in the integrity of parts, but desire that it may attain to a fulness of understanding and stature; and then, lastly, to a fulness of age: we would have full dishes, full cups, full coffers, full barns, a fulness of all things; save the best of all, which is, the Holy Ghost. Any measure of spiritual grace contents us: so as we are ready to say with Esau, *I have enough, my brother.* There is a sinful kind of contention, wherewith many fashionable Christians suffer themselves to be beguiled, to the utter undoing of their souls: for, hereupon they grow utterly careless to get, what they think they have already: who cares to eat, that is full crammed? And, by this means, they live and die graceless: for, had they ever tasted how sweet the Lord is in the graces of his Holy Spirit, they could never think they had enough; and, while they do think so, they are

utterly uncapable of either having or desiring more. As there is a sinful, so there is a holy covetousness; which, the more it hath, the more it affects. Lord, make me thus covetous, and I cannot chuse but be rich.

XLIII.

What a marvellous familiarity was this, which Moses had with God, that, *the Lord spake unto Moses, face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend!* Exod. xxxiii. 11: and, yet more, that Moses so spake to God! What a bold and high request was that, which Moses made to God: *I beseech thee shew me thy glory;* that is, as it is there interpreted, *thy face!* that face, which no man might see and live. Lo; God hath immediately before spoken to Moses, even to his face, out of the cloudy pillar: that doth not satisfy his holily-ambitious soul: but, as he heard the voice, so he must see the face of the Almighty. That cloudy pillar did sufficiently represent unto him the presence of the great God of Israel: yet still he sues for a sight of his glory. This is no pattern for flesh and blood: far be it from our thoughts, to aspire so high. *Thy face, O God, will we seek:* but, in thy blessed ordinances; not, in thy glorious and incomprehensible essence. It is not for me, as yet to presume so far, as to desire to see that infinite light, which thou art; or that light, wherewith thou art clothed; or that light inaccessible, wherein thou dwellest: only, now shew me the light of thy countenance, in grace; and prepare my soul for that light of glory, when I shall see as I am seen.

XLIV.

In the waters of life, the Divine Scriptures, there are shallows, and there are deeps: shallows, where the lamb may wade; and deeps, where the elephant may swim. If we be not wise to distinguish, we may easily miscarry: he, that can wade over the ford, cannot swim through the deep; and, if he mistake the passage, he drowns. What infinite mischief hath arisen to the Church of God, from the presumption of ignorant and unlettered men; that have taken upon them to interpret the most obscure Scriptures, and pertinaciously defended their own sense! How contrary is this to all practice, in whatsoever vocation! In the Tailor's trade, every man can stitch a seam; but every man cannot cut out a garment: in the Sailor's art, every one may be able to pull at a cable; but every one cannot guide the helm: in the Physician's profession, every gossip can give some ordinary receipts upon common experience; but, to find the nature of the disease, and to prescribe proper remedies from the just grounds of art, is proper to the professors of that science; and we think it absurd and dangerous, to allow every ignorant mountebank to practise: in matter of Law, every plain countryman knows what belongs to distraining, impounding, replevying; but, to give sound counsel to a client in a point of difficulty, to draw firm conveyances, to plead effectually, and to give sound judgment in the hardest cases, is for none but barristers and benchers: and shall we think it safe, that in Divinity which is the Mistress of all Sciences, and in matters which may concern the eter-

nal safety of the soul, every man should take upon him to shape his own coat, to steer his own way, to give his own dose, to put and adjudge his own case? The old word was, That artists are worthy to be trusted in their own trade. Wherefore hath God given to men skill in arts and tongues? Wherefore do the aptest wits spend their times and studies from their infancy upon these sacred employments, if men altogether inexpert in all the grounds, both of art and language, can be able to pass as sound a judgment in the depths of theological truths, as they? How happy were it, if we could all learn, according to that word of the Apostle, to keep ourselves within our own line! As Christians, the Scriptures are ours; but, to use, to enjoy: to read, to hear, to learn, to meditate, to practise; not to interpret, according to our private conceit: for this faculty we must look higher: *The priest's lips are to preserve knowledge, and they shall seek the Law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts;* Mal. ii. 7.

XLV.

When we see the year in his prime and pride, decked with beautiful blossoms and all goodly varieties of flowers, cheered with the music of birds, and stated in a sweet and moderate temper of heat and cold; how glad we are, that we have made so good an exchange for a hard and chilling winter; and how ready we could be, to wish that this pleasant and happy season might last all the year long! But herein, were our desires satisfied, we should wish to our own great disadvantage: for, if the Spring were not followed with an intention of Summer's heat, those fruits, whose hopes we see in the bud and flower, could never come to any perfection; and even that succeeding fervour, if it should continue long, would be no less prejudicial to the health and life of all creatures; and if there were not a relaxation of that vigorous heat in Autumn, so as the sap returns back into the root, we could never look to see but one year's fruit. And thus also it is spiritually: if our prosperity were not intermixed with vicissitudes of crosses, and if the lively beams of grace were not sometimes interchanged with cold desertions, we should never know what belongs to spiritual life. What should we do then, but be both patient of, and thankful for, our changes; and make no account of any constancy, till we attain to the region of rest and blessedness?

XLVI.

What fools doth the Devil make of those men, which would fain otherwise be accounted wise! Who would think that men could be so far forsaken of their reason, as to fall down before those stocks and stones, which their own hands had carved? to guide their enterprises, by the fond auguries of the flying, or posture, or noise of fowls; or the inspection of the entrails of beasts? to tie the confidence of their success to certain scrawls and characters, which themselves have devised? to read their own or others' fortunes, in their hands or stars? to suffer themselves mocked with deceitful visions? Neither are his spiritual delusions less gross and palpable.

Wise Solomon speaks of *the wickedness of folly;* Eccl. vii. 25: and we may no less truly invert it, The folly of wickedness. The Fool, saith our Saviour, *builds his house upon the sand;* Matth. vii. 26: so as it may be washed away with the next waves: what other doth the foolish worldling, that builds all his hopes upon *uncertain riches,* 1 Tim. vi. 17; momentary pleasures, Heb. xi. 25; deceitful favours, Prov. xxxi. 30. *The fool,* saith Solomon, *walketh in darkness;* Eccl. ii. 14: the sinner walks in the darkness of ignorance; through the works of darkness, to the pit of darkness. *The fool,* saith the Preacher, *knows not the way into the city;* Eccl. x. 15: the worldling may, perhaps, hit the way through the golden gates of honour, or down to the mines of wealth, or to the flowery garden of pleasure; but the way of true peace he knows not: he no more knows the way to heaven, than if there were none. *The fool,* saith the Psalmist, *hath said in his heart, There is no God:* did not the wicked man say so, he durst not wilfully sin in the face of so mighty and dreadful an avenger. Lastly, the fool is apt to part with his patrimony, for some gay toys: and how ready is the carnal heart, to cast away the favour of God, the inheritance of heaven, the salvation of his soul, for these vain earthly trifles! Holy men are wont to pass with the world for God's fools: alas! how little do these censurers know to pass a true judgment of wisdom and folly! He, that was rapt into the third heaven, tells us, that *the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God stronger than men;* 1 Cor. i. 25: but this we are sure of, that wicked men are the Devil's fools; and that *judgments are prepared for scorners, and stripes for the back of fools;* Prov. xix. 29.

XLVII.

There are some things, which are laudable in man, but cannot be incident into God; as a bashful shamefacedness, and holy fear: and there are some dispositions blame-worthy in men, which are yet, in a right sense, holily ascribed unto God; as unchangeableness, and irrepentance. Attributes and qualities receive their limitations, according to their meet subjects to which they belong; with this sure rule, That whatsoever may import an infinite purity and perfection, we have reason to ascribe to our Maker; what may argue infirmity, misery, corruption, we have reason to take to ourselves. Neither is it otherwise, in the condition of men: one man's virtue is another's vice: so, boldness in a woman, bashfulness in an old man, bounty in a poor man, parsimony in the great, are as foully unbeseeming; as boldness in a soldier, bashfulness in a child, bounty in the rich, parsimony in the poor, are justly commendable. It is not enough for us to know what is good in itself, but what is proper for us: else, we may be blemished with that, which is another's honour.

XLVIII.

It is easy, to observe, that there are five degrees of the digestion of our spiritual food. First, it is received into the cell of the ear; and there digested, by a careful attention; then it is conveyed into

the brain; and there concocted, by due meditation: from thence, it is sent down into the heart; and there digested, by the affections: and, from thence, it is conveyed to the tongue; in conference and holy confession: and, lastly, it is thence transmitted to the hand; and there receives perfect digestion, in our action and performance. And, as the life and health of the body cannot be maintained, except the material food pass through all the degrees of bodily concoction; no more can the soul live and prosper, in the want of any of those spiritual degrees of digestion: and, as where the food is perfectly concocted, the body grows fat and vigorous; so it is with the soul, where the spiritual repast is thus kindly digested. Were there not failings in all these degrees, the souls of men would not be so meagre and unthriving as they are. Some there are, that will not give so much as ear-room to the word of truth: such are willing recusants. Others will admit it perhaps so far; but there let it rest: these are fashionable auditors. Some others can be content to let it enter into the brain; and take up some place in their thoughts and memories: these are speculative professors. Some, but fewer, others let it down into their hearts, and there entertain it with secret liking; but hide it in their bosoms, not daring to make profession of it to the world: these are close Nicodemians. Others take it into their mouths, and busy their tongues in holy chat; yet do nothing: these are formal discoursers. But, alas, how few are there, whose hands speak louder than their tongues; that conscionably hear, meditate, affect, speak, do the word of their Maker and Redeemer!

XLIX.

Men, that are in the same condition, speed not always alike: Barabbas was a thief, murderer, seditionary; and deserved hanging, no less than the two thieves, that were crucified with our Saviour: yet he is dismissed, and they executed. And, even of these two, as our Saviour said of the two women grinding at the mill, one was taken, the other refused: one went, before Peter, to paradise; the other went, before Judas, into hell. The providence and election of a God may make a difference: we have no reason, in the same crime, to presume upon a contrary issue: if that gracious hand shall exempt us from the common judgment of our consorts in evil, we have cause to bless his mercy; but if his just hand shall sweep us away in the company of our wicked consociates, we have reason to thank none but ourselves for our sufferings.

L.

How sweet a thing is revenge to us, naturally! Even the very infant rejoices to see him beaten, that hath angered him; and is ready, with his little hand, to give that stroke to the by-stander, which he would have with more force returned to the offender: and how many have we known, in mortal quarrels, cheerfully bleeding out their last drop, when they have seen their enemy gasping and dy-

ing before them! This alone shews, how much there is remaining in our bosom, of the sting of that old serpent, who was a murderer from the beginning; delighting in death, and enjoying our torment: whereas, on the contrary, true grace is merciful, ready to forgive, apt to return good for evil, to pray for our persecutors; Col. iii. 13. Nothing doth more clearly evince what spirit we are of, than our disposition in wrongs received: the carnal heart breathes nothing but revenge; and is straight wringing the sword out of the hands of him, that hath said, *Vengeance is mine;* Rom. xii. 19; Deut. xxxii. 35: the regenerate soul, contrarily, gives place to wrath, and *puts on the bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing, forgiving;* Col. iii. 12, 13; and will not *be overcome with evil, but overcomes evil with good;* Rom. xii. 21. We have so much of God, as we can remit injuries; so much of Satan, as we would revenge them.

LI.

It is worth observing, how nature hath taught all living creatures, to be their own physicians: the same power, that gave them a being, hath led them to the means of their own preservation. No Indian is so savage, but that he knows the use of his tobacco and contra-yerva. Yea, even the brute creatures are bred with this skill: the dog, when he is stomach-sick, can go right to his proper grass; the cat, to her nep; the goat, to his hemlock; the weasel, to rue; the hart, to ditany: the sick lion can cure himself with an ape; the monkey, with a spider; the bear, with an ant-heap; the panther, with man's dung; and the stork is said to have taught man the use of the glyster: to what purpose should we instance, when the case is universal? the toad hath recourse to his plantain-leaf; the tortoise to his pennyroyal; and, in short, there is none, but knows his own medicine. As for the reasonable creature, in all the civilized regions of the world, we may well say now of every nation as it was of old said of Egypt, That it is a country of physicians. There is not a house-wife, but hath an apothecary's shop in her garden; which affords her those receipts, whereby she heals the ails of her complaining family. Only mankind is mortally soul-sick; and naturally neither knows, nor seeks, nor cares for remedy. O thou, that art the Great Physician in Heaven, first cure our insensibleness: make thou us as sick of our sins, as we have made ourselves sick by sin; and, then, speak the word, and we shall be whole.

LII.

When I consider the precious ornaments of the High Priest, the rich fabric and furniture of the Tabernacle, the bountiful gifts which the princes of the tribes offered at the dedication of the altar; Num. viii; I cannot but think, what a mass of wealth Israel brought with them out of Egypt. These treasures grew not in the wilderness: neither did Jacob and his sons bring them out of Canaan: they were gathered in their Goshen. It was a hard bondage, under which Israel was held by the latter Pharaohs: yet, as if then, instead of

the furnaces of bricks, they had been labouring in the silver mines to their own advantage; they come out laden with precious metals. What should I say to this? God said, *Israel is my firstborn:* and the firstborn was to have a double portion. What was Israel, but a type of God's Church? now, the Church of God may be held down with cruel tyranny; but, in spite of all opposition, it will thrive. And, *though they have lain among the pots, yet shall they be as the wings of a dove covered with silver; and her feathers, with yellow gold;* Psalm lxviii. 13. And, if the Spouse of Christ shall be stripped of her outward ornaments, *yet the King's daughter is all glorious within;* rich in those heavenly endowments of grace and holiness, which shall make her dear and lovely in the eyes of her celestial Bridegroom. Shortly, the Church may be impaired in her external estate; but if, the while, she gathers so much the more of those better treasures, what hath she lost? *Godliness is great gain, with contentment.* If she have less of the world, and more of God; what cause can she have of complaint, or her enemies of insultation?

LIII.

He, that is a God of Order, loves both to set and keep it. For the service of his sanctuary, he appointed several offices; and, in those offices, several degrees. None of those might interfere with others. The Levites might not meddle with the Priests' charge: nor one degree of Levites with another. The Porters might not thrust in amongst the Singers; though, perhaps, some of their voices might be more tunable: neither might the Singers change places with the Porters. The sons of Merari, that were to carry the boards, bars, and pillars of the tabernacle and the court; might not change with the sons of Gershon, for the lighter burden of the curtains and hangings; Num. iv. 21—33: nor those of Gershon, for the more holy load of the vessels of the sanctuary, committed to the sons of Kohath; Num. iv. 15. neither might the sons of Kohath so much as go in, to see the covering of those sacred utensils by Aaron and his sons; upon no less pain, than death; Num. iv. 20. So punctual was God, in setting every man his proper station; and holding him to it, without either neglect or change. And why should we think God less curious in his Evangelical Church? it was the charge of him, who, next under the Almighty, had the marshalling of the Church of the Gentiles; *Let every man abide in the same calling, wherein he was called;* 1 Cor. vii. 20. Perhaps there may be a better head for policy, upon plebeian shoulders, than the governor's: shall that man leave his rank, and thrust into the chair of government? Neither is it other in spiritual offices. It is no thinking, that the wise and holy God will be pleased with a well-meant confusion. For all our employments in the service of the Almighty, we must consult, not with our abilities, but with our vocation.

LIV.

I see too many men, willing to live to no purpose; caring only to be rid of time, on what terms soever; making it the only scope

of their life, to live: a disposition, that may well befit brute creatures, which are not capable of any other aim, save merely their own preservation; but, for men that enjoy the privilege of reason, for Christians that pretend a title to religion, too base and unworthy. Where God hath bestowed these higher faculties, he looks for other improvements: for, what a poor thing is it, only to live! a thing, common to us, with the most despised vermin, that breeds on our own corruption; but, to live for some more excellent ends, is that, which reason suggests, and religion perfects. Here, then, are divers subordinations of ends; whereof one makes way for another, and all for the supreme. We labour and exercise, that we may eat: we eat, that we may live; and maintain health and strength: we desire health and strength, that we may do good to ourselves and many; that we may be able to do service to God, king, and country: and, therein we drive at the testimony of a good conscience; approving to God our holy desires and endeavours: and, in all these, at the glory and salvation of our souls: and, lastly, in that, as the highest of all ends, at the glory of our blessed Creator and Redeemer. This is indeed to live: otherwise, we may have a being for a time upon earth, but a life I cannot call it; and, when we must cease to be, we are necessarily swallowed up, with the horror of either not being at all, or of being eternally miserable.

LV.

All our love is moved from some good, which we apprehend in the party loved: carnal love, from beauty; worldly, from gain; spiritual, from grace; divine, from infinite goodness. It must needs be, therefore, that, when the ground and motive of our love faileth, the affection itself must cease. Those, that are enamoured of a beautiful face, find their passion cooled, with a loathsome deformity: those, that are led by the hopes of profit, like wasps, leave buzzing about the gally-pot, when all the honey is gone: those, that could carry the rod familiarly in their hand, run from it when they see it turned to a serpent. Contrarily, when that, which attracts our love, is constant to itself and everlasting, the affection set upon it is permanent and eternal: if, then, I love God for riches, for preferment, for my own indemnity; when intervening crosses strip me of the hopes of all these, I shall be ready to say, with that distempered king of Israel, *Behold, this evil is of the Lord: what should I wait on the Lord any longer?* 2 Kings vi. 33. If my respects to my Saviour be for the loaves and fishes, my heart is carried away with those baskets of fragments; but, if I can love God for his goodness' sake, this love shall out-last time, and overmatch death; Cant. viii. 6.

LVI.

What a wretched narrowness of heart is this, which I find in myself; that, when I may have all things, I take up with nothing; and, when I may be possessed of an infinite good, I please myself in grasping a little thick clay! It was a large word, that the Apostle said to his Corinthians: *Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or*

life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours; 1 Cor. iii. 22. What shall we think they were richer than their neighbours? or is not this the condition of all those, of whom he can say in the next words, *ye are Christ's?* There, there comes in all our right to this infinite wealth: of ourselves, we are beggars; in him, who is Lord of All, we are feoffed in all things: for, while he saith, *All are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's*; he doth, in effect, say, "Christ is yours; and, in him, God is yours;" for this right is mutual. How else should all things be ours, if God were not ours; without whom, all is nothing? and how should God the Father be ours, without that Son of his Love, who hath said, *All things, that the Father hath, are mine;* John xvi. 15. *Thou, O Father, art in me, and I in thee;* John xvii. 21. *No man cometh to the Father, but by me;* John xiv. 6? If then Christ be mine, all is mine: and if I have so oft received him, and so often renewed my union with him, how is he but mine? O Saviour, let me feel myself throughly possest of thee, whether the world slide or sink, I am happy.

LVII.

God will not vouchsafe to allow so much honour to wicked instruments, as to make them the means of removing public evils. The magicians of Egypt could have power to bring some plagues upon the land, but had not the power to take them away. Certainly, there needed a greater power, to give a being to the frogs, than to call them off; yet this latter they cannot do, who prevailed in the first: Moses and Aaron must he called, to fetch off that judgment, which the sorcerers have brought upon themselves. Neither is it otherwise, still: wicked men can draw down those plagues upon a nation, which only the faithful must remove: the sins of the one make work for the others' intercession. Do we, therefore, smart and groan under heavy calamities? we know to whom we are beholden: *Thus saith the Lord to this people, Thus have they loved to wander: they have not refrained their feet; therefore he will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins. When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offerings and an oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence;* Jer. xiv. 10, 12. Do we desire to be freed from the present evils, and to escape an utter desolation? they are Moses and Aaron, that must do it: *He said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them;* Psalm cvi. 23. When our quarrel is with heaven, it is not our force, or our policy, that can save us. Every faithful man is a favourite of the King of Glory; and can do more, than command legions. Then is a people in some good way towards safety, when they have learned to know their friends. While we have good men's prayers to grapple with wicked men's sins, there may be hopes of recovery.

LVIII.

The aiming at a good end, can be no just excuse, for an unlawful act or disposition: but, if contentment did consist in having much, it were a sore temptation to a man to be covetous; since that contentation is the thing, wherein the heart of man is wont to place its chief felicity; neither indeed can there be any possible happiness without it. But, the truth is, abundance is no whit guilty, so much as of ease; much less, of a full joy: how many have we known, that have spent more pleased and happy hours, under a house of sticks, and walls of mud, and roof of straw; than great potentates have done, under marbles and cedar! And how many, both wise Heathen and mortified Christians, have rid their hands of their cumbersome store, that they might be capable of being happy! Other creatures do naturally neglect that, which abused reason bids us dote upon. If we had no better powers than beasts or fowls, we should not at all care for this either white or red earth: and, if our graces were as great as the least of Saints, we should look carelessly upon the preciousest and largest treasures that the earth can afford. Now, our debauched reason, instead of stirring us up to emulate the best creatures, draws us down below the basest of them; moving us to place our happiness in those things, which have neither life nor true worth; much less, can give that, which they have not. It is not for the generous souls of Christians, to look so low, as to place their contentment in any thing; whether within the bowels, or upon the face of this earth: but to raise their thoughts up to the glorious region of their original and rest; *looking, not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal;* 2 Cor. iv. 18.

LIX.

The holy Psalmist knew well what he said, when he called the thunder in the clouds, *The voice of the Lord;* a *voice, powerful* and *full of majesty;* Psalm xxix. 4. The very heathens made this the most awful act of their Jupiter; which the Spirit of God expresses in a more divine language: *The God of glory thundereth;* verse 3. Upon this dreadful sound it is, that the Psalmist calls to the *mighty ones*, to *give unto the Lord glory and strength*, to *give unto the Lord the glory due to his Name;* verses 1, 2: as it were advising the great commanders of the world, when they hear it thunder, to fall down on their knees; and to lift up their hands and eyes, to that great God, that speaks to them from heaven. No man needs to bid the stoutest heart to fear, when this terrible sound strikes through his ear; which is able to drive even Neros and Caligulas into bench-holes: but this mighty voice calls for an improvement of our fear, to the glory of that Almighty power whence it proceeds. Perhaps, the presumption of man will be finding out the natural causes of this fearful uproar in the clouds; but the working by means derogates nothing from the God of Nature. Neither yet are all thunders natural: that whirlwind and thunder, wherein God spake to Job;

Job xl. 9. xxxviii. 1: that thunder and lightning, wherein God spake to Moses and Israel in mount Sinai; Exod. xix: that thunder and rain, wherewith God answered the prayer of Samuel in wheat-harvest, for Israel's conviction in the unseasonable suit for their king; 1 Sam. xii. 17, 18: that thundering voice from heaven, that answered the prayer of the Son of God, for the glorifying of his Name; John xii. 28, 29: the seven thunders, that uttered their voices to the Beloved Disciple in Patmos; Rev. x. 3, 4—had nothing of ordinary nature in them. And, how many have we heard and read of, that, for slighting of this great work of God, have at once heard his voice, and felt his stroke! Shortly, if any heart can be unmoved at this mighty voice of God, it is stiffer than the rocks in the wilderness: for, *The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness, the Lord shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh;* Psalm xxix. 8. For me, I tremble at the power, while I adore the mercy, of that great God, that speaks so loud to me. It is my comfort, that He is my Father, who approves himself thus omnipotent: his love is no less infinite, than his power: let the terror be to them, that know him angry; let my confidence overcome my fear: *It is the Lord; let him do what he will.* All is not right with me, till I have attained to tremble at him, while he shineth; and to rejoice in him, while he thundereth.

LX.

We talk of mighty warriors, that have done great exploits in conquering kingdoms; but the Spirit of God tells us of a greater conquest, than all theirs: *Whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world: and this is the victory, that overcometh the world, even our faith,* 1 John v. 4. Alas! the conquest of those great commanders was but poor and partial; of some small spots of the earth: the conquest of a regenerate Christian is universal; of the whole world. Those other conquerors, while they prevailed abroad, were yet overcome at home; and, while they were the lords of nations, were no other than vassals to their own lusts: these, begin their victories at home; and enlarge their triumphs, over all their spiritual enemies. The glory of those other victors, was laid down with their bodies in the dust: the glory that attends these, is eternal. What pity it is, that the true Christian should not know his own greatness: that he may raise his thoughts accordingly; and bear himself as one, that tramples the world under his feet! *For all that is in the world,* is *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life;* 1 John ii. 16: these, he hath truly subdued in himself; not so as to bereave them of life, but of rule: if he have left them some kind of being still in him, yet he hath left them no dominion; and therefore may well style himself the Lord of the World. Far, far therefore be it from him, that he should so abject and debase himself, as to be a slave to his vassals: none, but holy and high thoughts and demeanors may now beseem him; and, in these spiritual regards of his inward greatness and self conquests, his word must be, "Either Cæsar, or nothing."

LXI.

I see so many kinds of phrensies in the world, and so many seemingly wise brains taken with them; that I much doubt, whom I may be sure to account free, from either the touch, or at least the danger of this indisposition. How many opinions do I see raised every day, that argue no less than a mere spiritual madness: such as, if they should have been but mentioned seven years ago, would have been questioned out of what bedlam they had broken loose! And, for dispositions; how do we see one, so ragingly furious, as if he had newly torn off his chains, and escaped: another, so stupidly senseless, that you may thrust pins into him, up to the head, and he startles not at it! One, so dumpishly sad, as if he would freeze to death in melancholy, and hated any contentment but in sorrow: another, so apishly jocund, as if he cared for no other pastime than to play with feathers! One, so superstitiously devout, that he is ready to cringe and crouch to every stock: another, so wildly profane, that he is ready to spit God in the face! Shortly, one, so censorious of others, as if he thought all men mad but himself: another, so mad, as that he thinks himself and all madmen sober and well-witted! In this store and variety of distempers, were I not sure of my own principles, I could easily misdoubt myself: now, settled on firm grounds, I can pity and bewail the woeful distraction of many; and can but send them for recovery to that Divine Wisdom, who calls to them in the openings of the gates, and uttereth her words, saying: *How long, ye silly ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? turn you at my reproof;* Prov. i. 22. *O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart;* Prov. viii. 5. *Blessed is the man, that heareth me, watching daily at my gates: but he, that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me, love death;* Prov. viii. 34, 36.

LXII.

Man, as he consists of a double nature, flesh and spirit; so is he placed in a middle rank, betwixt an angel, which is spirit, and a beast, which is flesh; partaking of the qualities, and performing the acts, of both. He is angelical, in his understanding; in his sensual affections, bestial: and, to whether of these he most inclineth and conformeth himself, that part wins more of the other, and gives a denomination to him: so as, he, that was before half angel, half beast, if he be drowned in sensuality, hath lost the angel, and is become a beast; if he be wholly taken up with heavenly meditations, he hath quit the beast, and is improved angelical. It is hard to hold an equal temper: either he must degenerate into a beast, or be advanced to an angel. Mere reason sufficiently apprehends the difference of the condition: could a beast be capable of that faculty, he would wish to be a man, rather than a brute, as he is. There is not more difference, betwixt a man and beast, than between an angel and a brutish man. How must

I needs, therefore, be worse than beast, if, when I may be preferred to that happy honour, I shall rather affect to be a beast, than an angel! Away, then, with the bestial delights of the sensual appetite: let not my soul sink in this mud: let me be wholly for those intellectual pleasures, which are pure and spiritual; and let my ambition be, to come as near to the angel, as this clog of my flesh will permit.

LXIII.

There is great difference in men's dispositions under affliction: some there are, dead-hearted patients, that grow mopish and stupid, with too deep a sense of their sufferings: others, out of a careless jollity, are insensible even of sharp and heavy crosses. We are wont to speak of some, whose enchanted flesh is invulnerable: this is the state of those hearts, which are so bewitched with worldly pleasures, that they are not to be pierced with any calamity, that may befal them, in their estates, children, husbands, wives, friends; so as they can say, with Solomon's drunkard, *They have stricken me, and I was not sick: they have beaten me, but I felt it not:* Prov. xxiii. 35. These are dead flesh, which do no more feel the knife, than if it did not at all enter; for whom some corrosives are necessary, to make them capable of smart. This disposition, though it seem to carry a face of fortitude and patience, yet is justly offensive; and not a little injurious, both to God and the soul: to God; whom it endeavours to frustrate of those holy ends, which he proposeth to himself in our sufferings; for wherefore doth he afflict us, if he would not have us afflicted? wherefore doth the father whip the child, but that he would have him smart, and by smarting bettered? he looks for cries and tears; and the child, that weeps not under the rod, is held graceless: to the soul; whom it robs of the benefit of our suffering; for what use can there be of patience, where there is no sense of evil? and how can patience have its perfect work, where it is not? Betwixt both these extremes, if we would have our souls prosper, a mid-disposition must be attained: we must be so sensible of evils, that we be not stupified with them; and so resolute under our crosses, that we may be truly sensible of them: not so brawned under the rod, that we should not feel it; nor yet so tender, that we should over-feel it: not more patient under the stripe, than willing to kiss the hand that inflicts it.

LXIV.

God, as he is one, so he loves singleness and simplicity in the inward parts. As, therefore, he hath been pleased to give us those senses double, whereby we might let in for ourselves, as our eyes and ears; and those limbs double, whereby we might act for ourselves; as our hands and feet: so those, which he would appropriate to himself, as our hearts for belief, and our tongue for confession; he hath given us single; neither did he ever ordain, or can abide, two hearts in a bosom, two tongues in one mouth. It is then the hateful style, which the Spirit of God gives to a hypocrite; that he is *double minded;* James iv. 8. In the language of

God's Spirit, a fool hath no heart; and a dissembler hath a heart, and a heart: and, surely, as a man, that hath two heads, is a monster in nature; so he, that hath two hearts, is no less a spiritual monster to God. For the holy and wise God hath made one for one; one mind or soul, for one body: and, if the regenerate man have two men in one; the old man, and the new; yet it is so, as that one is flesh, the other spirit: the mind then is not double; but the law of the mind is opposed to the law of the flesh; Rom. vii. 23: so as here are strivings in one heart, not the sidings of two. For, surely, the God of Unity can neither endure multiplication nor division of hearts, in one breast. If, then, we have one heart for God, another for Mammon, we may be sure God will not own this latter: how should he, for he made it not? Yea, most justly will he disclaim both; since that, which he made, was but one; this, double. And, as the Wise Man hath told us, that God hates nothing which he hath made: so may we truly say, God hateth whatsoever he made not; since what he made not, is only evil. When I have done my best, I shall have but a weak and a faulty heart; but, Lord, let it be but a single one: *Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting;* Psalm cxxxix. 23, 24.

LXV.

There is a kind of not-being in sin; for sin is not an existence of somewhat that is, but a deficiency of that rectitude which should be: it is a privation, but not without a real mischief; as blindness is but a privation of sight, but a true misery. Now, a privation cannot stand alone: it must have some subject to lean upon: there is no blindness, but where there is an eye; no death, but where there hath been a life. Sin, therefore, supposes a soul, wherein it is; and an act, whereto it cleaveth: and those acts of sin are they, which the Apostle calls the *works of darkness;* Eph. v. 11: so as there is a kind of operosity in sin; in regard whereof, sinners are styled, *the workers of iniquity;* Luke xiii. 27. And, surely, there are sins, wherein there is more toil and labour, than in the holiest actions: what pains and care doth the thief take, in setting his match; in watching for his prey! how doth he spend the darkest and coldest nights, in the execution of his plot! what fears, what flights, what hazards, what shifts are here, to avoid notice and punishment! The adulterer says, that *stolen waters are sweet:* but that sweet is sauced to him, with many careful thoughts, with many deadly dangers. The superstitious bigot, who is himself besotted with error, how doth he traverse sea and land to make a proselyte! what adventures doth he make, what perils doth he run, what deaths doth he challenge, to mar a soul! So as some men take more pains, to go to hell; than some others do, to go to heaven. Oh, the sottishness of sinners, that with a temporary misery will needs purchase an eternal! How should we think no pains sufficient, for the attaining of heaven; when we see wretched men toil so much, for damnation!

LXVI.

With what elegance and force, doth the Holy Ghost express our Saviour's leaving of the world; which he calls his taking home again; or his receiving up! Luke ix. 51. In the former, implying, that the Son of God was, for the time, sent out of his Father's house, to these lower regions of his exile or pilgrimage; and was now re-admitted into those his glorious mansions: in the latter, so intimating his triumphant ascension, that he passeth over his bitter passion. Surely, he was to take death in his way: so he told his disciples, in the walk to Emmans: *Ought not Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory?* Luke xxiv. 26. He must be lifted up to the Cross, ere his ascension to Heaven. But, as if the thought of death were swallowed up in the blessed issue of his death, here is no mention of ought but his assumption. Lo, death truly swallowed up in victory. Neither is it otherwise, proportionally, with us: wholly so it cannot be. For, as for him, death did but taste of him, could not devour him, much less put him over: it could not but yield him whole and entire the third day, without any impairing of his nature; yea, with a happy addition to it, of a glorious immortality; and, in that glorified Humanity, he ascended by his own power into his heaven. For us; we must be content, that one part of us lie rotting for the time, in the dust; while our spiritual part shall, by the ministry of angels, be received up to those everlasting habitations. Here is an assumption therefore, true and happy, though not, as yet, total. And why should I not, therefore, have my heart taken up, with the assured expectation of this receiving up into my glory? Why do I not look beyond death, at the eternally-blessed condition of this soul of mine; which, in my dissolution, is thus crowned with immortality? So doth the sea-beaten mariner cheer up himself with the sight of that haven, which he makes for. So doth the traveller comfort himself, when, after a tempestuous storm, he sees the sun breaking forth in his brightness. I am dying; but, O Saviour, thou art *the resurrection and the life: he, that believes in* thee, *though he be dead, yet shall he live*; John xi. 25. *Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead*; Isaiah xxvi. 19. *Blessed are the dead, that die in the Lord; for they rest from their labours, and their works follow them*; Rev. xiv. 13.

LXVII.

What need I be troubled, that I find in myself a fear of death? What Israelite is not ready to run away, at the sight of this Goliath? This fear is natural; and so far from being evil, that it was incident into the Son of God, who *was heard in that which he feared.* Christianity serves not to destroy, but to rectify nature. Grace regulates this passion in us, and corrects the exorbitances of it; never intended to root it out. Let me, therefore, entertain this fear; but so, as that I may master it. If I cannot avoid fear, let it be such, as may be incident into a faithful man. While my fear apprehends

just terror in the face of death, let my faith lay fast hold on that Blessed Saviour, who hath both overcome and sweetened it; on that blessed estate of glory, which accompanies it: my fear shall end in joy; my death, in advantage.

LXVIII.

It is too plain, that we are fallen upon the old age of the world; the last times, and therefore nearest to the dissolution. And, if time itself did not evince it, the disposition and qualities would most evidently do it: for, to what a cold temper of charity are we grown! what mere ice is in these spiritual veins! The unnatural and unkindly flushings of self-love abound indeed every where: but, for true Christian love, it is come to old David's pass; it may be covered with clothes, but it can get no heat; 1 Kings i. 1. Besides, what whimsies and fancies of dotage do we find the world possessed withal, beyond the examples of all former times! what wild and mad opinions have been lately broached, which the settled brains of better ages could never have imagined! Unto these, how extremely choleric the world is grown, in these later times, there needs no other proof, than the effusion of so much blood in this present age, as many preceding centuries of years have been sparing to spill. What should I speak of the moral distempers of diseases; the confluence whereof hath made this age more wickedly-miserable, than all the former? for, whenever was there so much profaneness, atheism, blasphemy, schism, excess, disobedience, oppression, licentiousness, as we now sigh under? Lastly, that, which is the common fault of age, loquacity, is a plain evidence of the world's declinedness: for, was there ever age guilty of so much tongue and pen as this last? were ever the presses so cloyed with frivolous work? every man thinks what he lists, and speaks what he thinks, and writes what he speaks, and prints what he writes. Neither would the world talk so much, did it not make account it cannot talk long. What should we do then, since we know the world truly old, and now going upon his great and fatal climacterical; but, as discreet men would carry themselves to impotent and decrepit age, bear with the infirmities of it, pity and bewail the distempers, strive against the enormities, and prepare for the dissolution?

LXIX.

There cannot be a stronger motive to awe and obedience, than that, which St. Peter enforceth; That God is both a Father and a Judge; 1 Peter i. 17: the one is a title of love and mercy; the other, of justice. Whatever God is, he is all that: he is all love and mercy; he is all justice. He is not so a Judge, that he hath waved the title and affection of a Father: he is not so a Father, that he will remit ought of his infinite justice as a Judge. He is, he will ever be, both these in one: and we must fasten our eyes upon both these, at once; and be accordingly affected unto both. He is a Father; therefore, here must be a loving awe: he is a Judge; and, therefore, here must be an awful love and obedience.

So must we lay hold upon the tender mercies of a Father, that we may rejoice continually: so must we apprehend the justice of a righteous Judge, that we do lovingly tremble. Why then should man despair? God is a Father. All the bowels of mortal and human love are strait to his: *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee;* saith the Lord; Isaiah xlix. 15. That, which is the title of his personality in divine relation, is also the title of his gracious relation to us, Father: neither can he be other, than he is styled. And, contrarily, how dare man presume, since this Father is a Judge? It is for sinful flesh and blood, to be partial: foolish parents may be apt to connive at the sins of their own loins or bowels, because theirs; either they will not see them, or not hate them, or not censure them, or not punish them: the infinite justice of a God cannot wink at our failings: there is no debt of our sin, but must be paid, in ourselves, or our surety. If then we call him *Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work;* why do we not *pass the time of our sojourning here in fear?* 1 Peter i. 17.

LXX.

How terrible a motion was that, which was made by the two disciples, of commanding fire to come down from heaven, and consume the inhospital Samaritans? Methinks, I could tremble but at the imagination of so dreadful a judgment, as they did not fear to sue for. Yet, if we look to the offence, it was no positive act of indignity offered to Christ; but the mere not lodging of his train; and that, not out of a rude inhumanity, but out of a religious scruple: what could they have said, if these Samaritans had pursued them with swords, and staves, and stones? Whom shall we hope to find free from cruelty of revenge, when even the Disciple of Love was thus overtaken? What wonder is it, if natural men be transported with furious desires, when so eminent domestics and followers of our Saviour were thus faulty? Surely, nature in man is cruel: neither is there any creature under heaven, so bloody to its own kind. Even bears, and wolves, and tigers devour not one another; and, if any of them fall out in single combats for a prey, here is no public engaging for blood. Neither do they affect to enjoy each others' torment; rather entertaining one anothers' complaints with pity: let but a swine cry, the rest of the herd within the noise come running in, to see and compassionate his pain. Only man rejoices in the misery of the same flesh and blood with himself, and loves to triumph in his revenge. While we are thus affected, we know not of what spirit we are: we may soon learn: we are even of that spirit, who was *a man-slayer from the beginning;* John viii. 44. As for the Good Spirit, his just style is, the *preserver of men;* Job vii. 20: and the errand of the Son of Man was, *not to destroy men's lives, but to save them;* Luke ix. 56; and his charge to these and all other his disciples, *Be merciful, as your Father also is merciful;* Luke vi. 36.

And how easily may we observe, that this very disciple, as if in way of abundant satisfaction for this rash oversight, calls more for love, than all the rest of his Master's train! telling us, that *God is love; and he, that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him;* 1 John iv. 16: and, *Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one, that loveth, is of God, and knoweth God. He, that loveth not, knoweth not God: for God is love;* 1 John iv. 7, 8. Shortly then, what would not this holy disciple have given, to have recalled this fiery motion? The more mercy and charity is in us, the more we have of God; the more fury and revenge, of Satan.

LXXI.

Much caution must be had, in our imitation of the actions of the holiest; cautions, both in respect of the persons, and of the actions: God himself, yea God clothed in flesh, though the pattern of all perfection, is not for our universal imitation: the most of their actions are for our wonder, not for our exampling. And, amongst men, how absurd were it in a peasant, to imitate a king! or one of the long robe, a soldier! If Moses climb up the hill of God, Sinai; shall another Israelite say, "Moses goes up, why not I?" so he might have paid dear for his presumption: Moses was called up; the rest were limited: and if a beast touch the hill, he shall die. That act may beseem one, which would be very incongruous in another: the dog fawns upon his master, and hath his back stroked; if the ass do the like, he is beaten. We are naturally apt to be carried with examples. It is one of the greatest improvements of wisdom, to know whom, in what, and how far, we may imitate. The best have their weaknesses: there is no copy, without a blur: *Be ye followers of me,* saith the Chosen Vessel: but how? *even as I am of Christ;* Phil. iii. 17. 1 Cor. iv. 16. 1 Cor. xi. 1. It is safe following him, that cannot err.

LXXII.

God who is simply one, infinitely perfect, absolutely complete in himself, enjoys himself fully, from all eternity, without any relation to the creature: but, knowing our wants and weaknesses, he hath ordained a society for our well-being; and therefore, even in man's innocency, could say, *It is not good for a man to be alone.* And why, Lord? why might not man have taken pleasure enough in the beauty and sweetness of his paradise; in contemplating thy heaven; in the command of thine obsequious creatures; and, above all, in the fruition of thy divine presence, in that happy integrity of his nature, without any accession of other helps? Surely, thou, who knewest well what disposition thou hadst put into him, intendedst to fit him with all meet conveniences: and thou, who madest him sociable, before he could have any society, thoughtest fit to stead him with such a society, as might make his life comfortable to him. Wise Solomon observes it out of his deep experience, for *a vanity under the sun, that there is one alone, and there is not a second;* and that, *two are better than one, because*

they have a good reward for their labour; Eccl. iv. 7, 8, 9. In the plantation of the Evangelical Church, the Apostles are not reckoned single, but by pairs; Matth. x. 2, 3, 4. and so doth their Lord send them upon the great errand of his Gospel: and, when he seconded that work, by a commission given to his Seventy Disciples, he *sent them two and two before his face, into every city and place, whither he himself would come;* Luke x. 1. After this, when our Saviour had left the earth, Paul and Barnabas go together; and, when they are parted, Paul and Silas, Barnabas and Mark, are sorted. Single endeavours seldom prosper: many hands make the work both quick and sure. They can be no friends to the happy estate of a family or church, that labour to cause distractions: division makes certain way for ruin.

LXXIII.

Under the Law, there was difference, as of ages, so of sexes. Circumcision was appropriated to the male. In the temple, there was the Court of the Jews; and, without that, the Court of the Women: neither might that sex go beyond their bounds: and still it is so in their Jewish Synagogues. But, in Christ, *there is neither male nor female.* As the soul hath no sex, so God makes no difference in the acceptation of either. As it is the honour of the one sex, that Christ, the Son of God, was a man: so it is the honour of the other sex, that he was born of a woman. And if the woman be, as she is in nature, the weaker vessel; yet she is no less capable of grace, than the stronger; as the thinnest glass may receive as precious liquor, as the best plate. Good Anna, as well as Simeon, gave glory to their new-born Saviour, *to all that looked for redemption in Jerusalem;* Luke ii. 38. And, afterwards, the holy women were no less zealous attendants of Christ, both in his life and death, than the most forward disciples; Luke viii. 2, 3: yea, they followed him when his domestic followers forsook him; neither could be parted, by either his Cross or his Grave. And they were the first, that were honoured with the notice and message of their Saviour's blessed resurrection and ascension; John xx. 17: than which, what employment could be more noble? *The Lord gave the word,* saith the Psalmist, *great was the company of the Preacheresses;* Psalm lxviii. 11: the word is feminine. However, therefore, in natural and politic respects, the philosopher might have some reason to bless God, that he had made him a man, and not a woman; yet, in spiritual, which are the best, regards, here is no inequality: so that it is the great mercy and goodness of our common Creator, that though he hath made a difference in the smallest matters, yet he makes none in the greatest; and that he so indifferently peoples heaven with both sexes, that, for ought we know, the greatest saint there, is of the weaker sex*.

LXXIV.

There is nothing more easy, than for a man to be courageous, in a time of safety; and to defy those dangers, which he neither

* King James's Preface Monitory.

feels nor sees. While the coast is clear, every man can be ready to say, with Peter, *Though all men, yet not I: If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise;* Mark xiv. 29, 31. But, when the evil hour cometh, when our enemy appears armed in the lists ready to encounter us, then to call up our spirits, and to grapple resolutely with dangers and death, it is the praise and proof of a true Christian valour. And this is that, which the Apostle calls *standing;* Eph. vi. 13, 14. in opposition to both falling and fleeing: falling, out of faintness; and fleeing, for fear. It shall not be possible for us thus to stand, if we shall trust to our feet. In and of ourselves, the best of us are but mere cowards; neither can be able so much as to look our enemy in the face. Would we be perfect victors? we must go out of ourselves, into the God of our strength. If we have made him ours, who shall, yea, who can, be against us? *We can do all things, through him that strengthens us;* Phil. iv. 13: all things; therefore conquer death and hell. If we be weakness, he is omnipotence. Put we on the Lord Jesus Christ by a lively faith, Rom. xiii. 14. what enemy can come within us, to do us hurt? *What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee, O God: in thee, O God, have I trusted; I will not fear what* (either) *flesh* (or spirit) *can do unto me;* Psalm lvi. 3, 4. *The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer: my God, my strength, in whom I will trust, my buckler, and the horn of my salvation: I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised; so shall I be saved from mine enemies;* Psalm xviii. 2, 3.

LXXV.

It is disparagement enough, that the Apostle casts upon all the visible things of this world, that *the things which are seen are temporary;* 2 Cor. iv. 18. Be they never so glorious, yet, being transitory, they cannot be worthy of our hearts. Who would care for a house of glass, if never so curiously painted and gilded? All things, that are measured by time, are thus brittle. Bodily substances, of what kind soever, lie open to the eye; and, being seen, can be in no other, than a fading condition. Even that goodly fabric of heaven, which we see and admire, must be changed; and, in a sort, dissolved; 2 Peter iii. 7, 12. How much more vanishing are all earthly glories! And, by how much shorter their continuance is, so much lower must be their valuation. We account him foolish, that will dote too much upon a flower, though never so beautiful; because we know it can be but a month's pleasure; and no care, no art can preserve it from withering: amongst the rest, the hemerocallis is the least esteemed, because one day ends its beauty. What madness then were it in us, to set our hearts upon these perishing contentments, which we must soon mutually leave; we them, they us! Eternity is that only thing, which is worthy to take up the thoughts of a wise man: that, being added to evil, makes the evil infinitely more intolerable; and, being added to good, makes the good infinitely more desireable. O Eternity! thou bottomless abyss of misery to the wicked: thou indeterminable

pitch of joy to the Saints of God: what soul is able to comprehend thee? What strength of understanding is able to conceive of thee? Be thou ever in my thoughts, ever before mine eyes. Be thou the scope of all my actions, of all my endeavours; and, in respect of thee, let all this visible world be to me as nothing: and, since only *the things, which are not seen* by the eye of sense, *are eternal*, Lord, shapen thou the eyes of my faith, that I may see those things invisible; and may, in that sight, enjoy, thy blessed eternity.

LXXVI.

What is all the world to us, in comparison of the bird in our bosom, our conscience? In vain shall all the world acquit and magnify us, if that secretly condemn us; and, if that condemn us not, *We have confidence towards God*, 1 John iii. 21. and may bid defiance to men and devils. Now, that it may not condemn us, it must be both pacified, and purged: pacified, in respect of the guilt of sin; purged, in respect of the corruption. For, so long as there is guilt in the soul, the clamours of an accusing and condemning conscience can no more be stilled, than the waters of the sea can stand still in a storm. There is then no pacification, without removing the guilt of sin; no removing of guilt, without remission; no remission, without satisfaction; no satisfaction, without a price of infinite value, answerable to the infiniteness of the justice offended: and this is no where to be had, but in the blood of Christ, God and man. All created and finite powers are but miserable comforters, physicians of no value, to this one. And the same power, that pacifieth the conscience from the guilt, must also purge it from the filthiness of sin; Heb. ix. 14. 1 John i. 7. even that blood of the Son of God, who *is made unto us of God, sanctification and redemption.* That faith, which brings Christ home to the soul, doth, by the efficacy of his Blessed Spirit, purify the heart (Acts xv. 9.) from *all filthiness* both *of flesh and spirit. Being justified by* this *faith, we have peace with God.* When once the heart is quieted from the uproars of self-accusation, and cleansed from dead works; what in this world can so much concern us, as to keep it so? which shall be done, if we shall give Christ the possession of our souls, and commit the keys into his only hands: so shall nothing be suffered to enter in, that may disturb or defile it, if we shall settle firm resolutions in our breasts, never to yield to the commission of any known, enormous sin. Failings and slips there will be in the holiest of God's Saints, while they carry their clay about them: for these, we are allowed to fetch forth a pardon, of course, from that infinite mercy of our God, who hath set a fountain open *to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin, and for uncleanness*; Zech. xiii. 1. by the force of our daily prayers. But if, through an over-bold security and spiritual negligence, we shall suffer ourselves to be drawn away into some heinous wickedness, it must cost warm water to recover us. Neither can it, in such a case, be safe for us, to suffer our

eyes to sleep, or our eye-lids to slumber, till we have made our peace with heaven. This done, and carefully maintained, what can make us other than happily secure? "Blessed is he, whose conscience hath not condemned him, and who is not fallen from his hope in the Lord;" Ecclus. xiv. 2.

LXXVII.

We cannot apprehend heaven, in any notion, but of excellency and glory: that, as it is in itself a place of wonderful resplendence and majesty; so, it is the palace of the most High God, wherein he exhibits his infinite magnificence: that it is the happy receptacle of all the elect of God: that it is the glorious rendezvous of the blessed angels: that we have parents, children, husband, wife, brothers, sisters, friends whom we dearly loved, there. For, such is the power of love, that it can endear any place to us, where the party affected is: much more the best. If it be a loathsome gaol, our affection can make it a delightful bower. Yea, the very grave cannot keep us off: the women could say of Mary, that she was gone to the grave of Lazarus, to weep there: and the zeal of those holy clients of Christ carries them to seek their (as they supposed still dead) Saviour, even in his tomb. Above all conceivable apprehensions then, wherein heaven is endeared to us, there is none comparable to that, which the Apostle enforceth to us, that, there *Christ sitteth at the right-hand of God;* Col. iii. 1. If we have a husband, wife, child, whom we dearly love, pent up in some tower or castle afar off, whither we are not allowed to have access, how many longing eyes do we cast thither! how do we please ourselves to think, within those walls is he inclosed whom my soul loveth, and who is inclosed in my heart! But, if it may be possible to have passage, though with some difficulty and danger, to the place, how gladly do we put ourselves upon the adventure! When, therefore, we hear and certainly know, that our most dear Saviour is above, in all heavenly glory; and that the heavens must contain him, till his coming again; with what full contentment of heart should we look up thither! How should we break through all these secular distractions; and be carried up, by our affections, which are the wings of the soul, towards a happy fruition of him! Good old Jacob, when he heard that his darling son was yet alive in Egypt, how doth he gather up his spirits, and takes up a cheerful resolution, *Joseph my son is yet alive, I will go and see him before I die!* Gen. xlv. 26. Do we think his heart was any more in Canaan, after he heard where his Joseph was? And shall we, when we hear and know where our dearest Saviour, typified by that good Patriarch, is; that he is gone before, to provide a place for us in the rich Goshen above; shall we be heartless in our desires towards him, and take up with earth? How many poor souls take tedious, costly, perilous voyages to that land, which only the bodily presence of our Saviour could denominate holy; their own wickedness, justly styles accursed: only to see the place, where our dear Saviour trod; where he stood, where he sat, lay, set his last foot-

ing; and find a kind of contentment in this sacred curiosity, returning yet, never the holier, never the happier! How then should I be affected with the sight of that place, where he is now in person, sitting gloriously at the right-hand of Majesty, adored by all the powers of heaven! Let it be a covenant between me and my eyes, never to look up at heaven, (as how can I look beside it?) but I shall, in the same instant, think of my Blessed Saviour, sitting there in his glorified Humanity, united to the incomprehensibly-glorious Deity, attended and worshipped by thousand thousands of saints and angels, preparing a place for me and all his elect in those eternal mansions.

LXXVIII.

How lively doth the Spirit of God describe the heavenly affections of faithful Abraham; that *he looked for a city, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God!* Heb. xi. 10. What city was this, but the celestial Jerusalem; the glorious seat of the Great Empire of Heaven? The main strength of any building is in the foundation: if that be firm and sure, the fabric, well knit together, will stand; but if that be either not laid, or lie loose and unsettled, the tottering frame doth but wait upon the next wind for a ruin. The good Patriarch had been used to dwell in tents, which were not capable of a foundation. It is like, he and his ancestors wanted not good houses in Chaldea, where they were formerly planted. God calls him forth of those fixed habitations, in his own country; to sojourn in tabernacles, or booths, in a strange land: his faith carries him cheerfully along: his present fruition gives way to hope for better things. Instead of those poor sheds of sticks and skins, he looks for a city: instead of those stakes and cords, he looks for foundations: instead of men's work, he looks for the architecture of God. Alas, we men will be building castles and towers here upon earth, or, in the air rather; such as either have no foundation at all, or, at the best, only a foundation in the dust: neither can they be any other, while they are of man's making; for what can he make in better condition than himself? The city, that is of God's building, is deep and firmly grounded upon the rock of his eternal decree; and hath more foundations than one, and all of them both sure and costly. God's material house, built by Solomon, had the foundation laid with great squared stone: but *the foundations of the wall of* this *city* of God are *garnished with all manner of precious stones;* Rev. xxi. 19. *Glorious things are spoken of thee, O thou city of God.* Why do I set up my rest in this house of clay, which is every day falling on my head, while I have the assured expectation of so glorious a dwelling above? *For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, but eternal in the heavens;* 2 Cor. v. 1.

LXXIX.

God, though he be free of his entertainments, yet is curious of his guests. We know what the great house-keeper said to the sordid guest: *Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wed-*

ding garment? To his feast of glory, none can come, but the pure: without this disposition, no man shall so much as see God; Heb. xii. 14. much less be entertained by him. To his feast of grace, none may come, but the clean; and those, who, upon strict examination, have found themselves worthy. That we may be meet to sit at either of these tables, there must be a putting off, ere there can be a putting on; a putting off the old garments, ere there can be a putting on the new; Col. iii. 9, 10: the old are foul and ragged; the new, clean and holy: for, if they should be worn at once, the foul and beastly under-garment would soil and defile the clean; the clean could not cleanse the foul. As it was in the Jewish law of holiness, holy flesh in the skirt of the garment could not infuse a holiness into the garment; but the touch of an unclean person might diffuse uncleanness to the garment; Hag. ii. 12, 13: thus our professed holiness and pretended graces are sure to be defiled by our secretly-maintained corruption; not our corruption sanctified by our graces: as, in common experience, if the sound person come to see the infected, the infected may easily taint the sound; the sound cannot, by his presence, heal the infected. If ever, therefore, we look to be welcome to the feasts of God, we must *put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him;* Col. iii. 9, 10.

LXXX.

It is not for us, to cast a disparagement upon any work of our Maker; much less upon a piece so near, so essential to us: yet, with what contempt doth the Apostle seem still to mention our *flesh!* And, as if he would have it slighted for some forlorn outcast, he charges us, not to *make provision for the flesh;* Rom. xiii. 14. What! shall we think the holy man was fallen out with a part of himself? Surely, sometimes, his language, that he gives it, is hard: *The flesh rebels against the spirit: I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing;* Rom. vii. 18. but how easy is it to observe, that the *flesh*, sometimes goes for the body of man; sometimes, for the body of sin! as the first, it is a partner with the soul; as the latter, it is an enemy: and the worst of enemies, spiritual. No marvel, then, if he would not have provision made for such an enemy. In outward and bodily enmity, the case, and his charge, is otherwise: *If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink*, Prov. xxv. 21. Rom. xii. 20: but here, *make no provision for the flesh.* What reason were there, that a man should furnish and strengthen an enemy against himself? But if the *flesh* be the body of the man, it must challenge a respect: but the very name carries an intimation of baseness: at the best, it is that, which is common to beasts with us: *There is one flesh*, saith the Apostle, *of men; another flesh of beasts;* 1 Cor. xv. 39. both are but flesh. Alas, what is it but a clod of earth, better moulded; the clog of the soul; a rotten pile; a pack of dust; a feast of worms? But, even as such, provision must be made for it; with a moderate and thrifty

care, not with a solicitous; a provision for the necessities and convenience of life, not for the fulfilling of the lusts. This flesh must be fed, and clad; not humoured, not pampered: so fed, as to hold up nature, not inordinateness: shortly, such a hand must we hold over it, as that we may make it a good servant, not a lawless wanton.

LXXXI.

What action was ever so good, or so completely done, as to be well taken of all hands? Noah and Lot foretell of judgments from God, upon the old world and Sodom; and are scoffed at: Israel would go to sacrifice to God in the wilderness; and they are idle: Moses and Aaron will be governing Israel according to God's appointment; *Ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi:* David will be dancing before the ark of the Lord; *he uncovers himself shamelessly, as one of the vain fellows;* 2 Sam. vi. 20: our Saviour is sociable; he is *a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners:* John Baptist is solitary, and austere; he doth it by Beelzebub, the prince of devils; Matt. xi. 18, 19: he rides in a homely pomp through Jerusalem; he affects a temporal kingdom; and he is no friend to Cæsar, that can suffer him to live: he is, by his almighty power, risen from the dead; his disciples stole him away, while the soldiers slept: the Spirit of God descends upon the Apostles in fiery and cloven tongues, and they, thus inspired, suddenly speak all languages; they *are full of new wine;* Acts ii. 13: Stephen preacheth Christ, the end of the Law; *he speaks blasphemous words against Moses and against God;* Acts vi. 11. And what aspersions were cast upon the primitive Christians, all histories witness. What can we hope to do or say, that shall escape the censures and misinterpretations of men, when we see the Son of God could not avoid it? Let a man profess himself honestly conscionable; he is a scrupulous hypocrite: let him take but a just liberty in things merely indifferent; he is loosely profane: let him be charitably affected to both parts, though in a quarrel not fundamental; he is an odious neuter, a lukewarm Laodicean. It concerns every wise Christian, to settle his heart in a resolved confidence, of his own holy and just grounds; and then to go on, in a constant course of his well-warranted judgment and practice, with a careless disregard of those fools'-bolts, which will be sure to be shot at him, which way soever he goes.

LXXXII.

All God's dear and faithful ones are notably described by the Apostle, to be such, as *love the appearing of our Lord Jesus;* 2 Tim. iv. 8: for, certainly, we cannot be true friends to those, whose presence we do not desire and delight in. Now this appearing, is either in his coming to us, or our going to him: whether ever it be, that he makes his glorious return to us, for the judgment of the world, and the full redemption of his elect; or, that he fetches us home to himself, for the fruition of his blessedness; in both, or either, we enjoy his appearance. If then we can only be content with either of these; but do not love them, nor wish for them;

our hearts are not yet right with God. It is true, that there is some terror in the way to both these: his return to us, is not without a dreadful Majesty; for *the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat,* 2 Pet. iii. 10. and the glorious retinue of his blessed angels must needs be with an astonishing magnificence: and, on the other part, our passage to him must be through the gates of death, wherein nature cannot but apprehend a horror: but the immediate issue of both these is so infinitely advantageous and happy, that the fear is easily swallowed up of the joy. Doth the daughter of Jephthah abate ought of her timbrels and dances, because she is to meet a father whose arms are bloody with victory? Judges xi. 34. Doth a loving wife entertain her returning husband otherwise than with gladness, because he comes home in a military pomp? Is the conqueror less joyful to take up his crown, because it is congratulated to him with many peals of ordnance? Certainly then, neither that heavenly state wherein Christ shall return to us, nor the fears of a harmless and beneficial death wherein we shall pass to him, neither may nor can hinder ought of our love to his appearing. O Saviour, come in whatever equipage or fashion thou wilt, thou canst be no other than lovely and welcome: *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.*

LXXXIII.

Suppose a man comes to me on the same errand, which the Prophet delivered to Hezekiah: *Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live;* 2 Kings xx. 1: with what welcome do I entertain him? Do I, with that good king, turn my face to the wall, and weep? or, do I say of the messenger, as David said of Ahimaaz, *He is a good man, and brings good tidings?* 2 Sam. xviii. 27. Surely, nature urges me to the former, which cannot but hold dissolution her greatest enemy; for what can she abhor so much, as a not-being? faith persuades me to the latter; telling me, that, *To die is gain;* Phil. i. 21. Now, whether of these two shall prevail with me? Certainly, as each of them hath a share in me; so shall either of them act its own part in my soul. Nature shall obtain so much of me, as to fetch from me, upon the sudden apprehension of death, some thoughts of fear: faith shall straight step in, and drive away all those weak fears; and raise up my heart to a cheerful expectation, of so gainful and happy a change. Nature shews me the ghastliness of death: faith shews me the transcendency of heavenly glory. Nature represents to me a rotten carcase: faith presents me with a glorious soul. Shortly, nature startles at the sight of death: faith out-faces and overcomes it. So then, I, who, at the first blush, could say, "O death, how bitter is thy remembrance!" Ecclus. xli. 1: can now, upon my deliberate thoughts, say, *I desire to depart, and to be with Christ;* Phil. i. 23.

LXXXIV.

In the carriage of our holy profession, God can neither abide us cowardly, nor indiscreet. The same mouth, that bade us, when we

are persecuted in one city, flee into another, said also, *he, that will save his life, shall lose it:* we may neither cloak cowardice with a pretended discretion, nor lose our discretion in a rash courage. He, that is most skilful and most valiant, may, in his combat, traverse his ground for an advantage; and the stoutest commander may fall flat, to avoid a cannon-shot. True Christian wisdom, and not carnal fear, is that, wherein we must consult for advice, when to stand to it, and when to give back. On the one side, he dies honourably, that falls in God's quarrel; on the other, he, that flies, may fight again. Even our Blessed Leader, that came purposely to give his life for the world, yet, when he found that he was laid for in Judea, flees into Galilee. The practice of some primitive Christians, that, in an ambition of martyrdom went to seek out and challenge dangers and death, is more worthy of our wonder and applause, than our imitation. It shall be my resolution, to be warily thrifty in managing my life, when God offers me no just cause of hazard; and, to be willingly profuse of my blood, when it is called for by that Saviour, who was not sparing of shedding his most precious blood for me.

LXXXV.

He had need to be well under-laid, that knows how to entertain the time and himself with his own thoughts. Company, variety of employments, or recreations, may wear out the day with the emptiest hearts: but, when a man hath no society but of himself, no task to set himself upon but what arises from his own bosom; surely, if he have not a good stock of former notions, or an inward mint of new, he shall soon run out of all, and, as some forlorn bankrupt, grow weary of himself. Hereupon it is, that men of barren and unexercised hearts can no more live without company, than fish out of the water: and those heremites and other votaries, which, professing only devotion, have no mental abilities to set themselves on work, are fain to tire themselves, and their unwelcome hours, with the perpetual repetitions of the same orisons, which are now grown to a tedious and heartless formality. Those contemplative spirits, that are furnished with gracious abilities, and got into acquaintance with the God of Heaven, may and can lead a life, even in the closest restraint or wildest solitariness, nearest to angelical; but those, which neither can have Mary's heart nor will have Martha's hand, must needs be unprofitable to others, and wearisome to themselves.

LXXXVI.

There is nothing more easy, than to be a Christian at large: but the beginnings of a strict and serious Christianity are not without much difficulty; for nature affects a loose kind of liberty, which it cannot endure to have restrained: neither fares it otherwise with it, than with some wild colt; which, at the first taking up, flings, and plunges, and will stand on no ground; but, after it hath been somewhile disciplined at the post, is grown tractable, and quietly

submits either to the saddle or the collar. The first is the worst: afterwards, that, which was tolerable, will prove easy; and that, which was easy, will be found pleasant. For, in true practical Christianity, there is a more kindly and better liberty: *Stand fast*, saith the Apostle, *in that liberty, wherewith Christ hath made you free;* Gal. v. 1. Lo here, a liberty of Christ's making; and, therefore, both just and excellent: for what other is this liberty, than a freedom; as from the tyranny of the law, so from the bondage of sin? *Being then made free from sin*, saith St. Paul, *ye became the servants of righteousness;* Rom. vi. 18. Here are two masters, under one of which every soul must serve: either sin, or righteousness: if we be free from one, we are bond-men to the other. We say truly, the service of God, that is of righteousness, is perfect freedom: but, to be free to sin, is a perfect bondage; and, to serve sin, is no other than a vassalage to the Devil. From this bondage, Christ only can free us: *If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed*, John viii. 36: and we are no Christians, unless we be thus freed: and, being thus freed, we shall rejoice in the pleasant fetters of our voluntary and cheerful obedience to righteousness; neither would we, for a world, return to those gieves and manacles of sin, which we once held our most dear and comely ornaments; and can truly say, *Thou hast set my feet in a large room;* Psalm xxxi. 8. *I will walk at liberty, for I seek thy precepts;* Psalm cxix. 45.

LXXXVII.

I cannot but pity and lament the condition of those Christians, who, for the hope of a little earthly dross, do willingly put themselves, for a continuance, out of the pale of God's Church. What do they else, but cast themselves quite out of the Almighty's protection; who hath not bound himself to follow them out of his own walks, or to seek them out amongst Turks and Infidels? Well may he say to them, as to the chief pastor of Pergamus, *I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is;* Rev. ii. 13: but, have they any reason to expect, that he should dwell with them there, under the reign of that prince of darkness? These men put upon themselves that hard measure, which the man after God's own heart complains to be put upon him by his worst enemies: *Woe is me, that I am constrained to dwell with Meshech, and to have my habitation in the tents of Kedar;* Psalm cxx. 5. That holy man could, in the bitterness of his soul, inveigh against his persecutors, for no other terms, than these men offer to themselves: *Cursed be they before the Lord, for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord; saying, Go, serve other gods;* 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. I speak not of those, who carry God along with them in his ordinance: all earths are alike to us, where we may freely enjoy his presence: but of those straggliers, who care not to live without God, so they may be befriended by mammon. How ill a match these poor men make for themselves, I send them to their Saviour to learn: *What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul; or*

what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Matt. xvi. 26. God forbid, I should give their souls for lost; but I must say, they are hazarded: for herein, doubtless, they tempt God, who hath not promised to keep them in any other, than their just ways; and they do, in a sort, tempt and challenge Satan, to draw them on either to a love of error and impiety, or at least to a cooling of their care and love of truth. How unlike are these men, to that wise merchant in the Gospel! He sold all that he had, to buy the pearl of great price; Matt. xiii. 45, 46: they sell the pearl, to buy a little worthless merchandize. As the greatest part of their traffic stands upon exchange, so I heartily wish they would make this one exchange more; of less care of their wealth, for more care of their souls.

LXXXVIII.

Even when Joseph was a great lord in Egypt, second to none but Pharaoh, and had the command of that richest country of the world; yet then his old father Jacob thought his poor parcel of Shechem worthy to be bequeathed to him, and embraced of him, as a noble patrimony; because it was in the promised land, and the legacy of a dying father. How justly do I admire the faith, both of the father and son, in this donation! Jacob was now in Goshen; Shechem was in Canaan: neither was the father now in the present possession; nor were the sons in some ages to enjoy it: it was four hundred and thirty years, that Israel must be a sojourner in a strange country, ere they shall enter into the promised land; Exod. xii. 41: yet now, as foreseeing the future possession, which his posterity should take of this spot of earth, so long after, Jacob gives Shechem to Joseph, and Joseph apprehends it as a rich blessing, as the double portion of the divided primogeniture. Infidelity is purblind; and can see nothing, but that, which is hard at hand: faith is quick-sighted; and discerns the events of many centuries of years, yea of ages to come. Abraham, saw his Saviour's day, and rejoiced to see it, a thousand nine hundred and forty years off; and Adam, before him, almost four thousand years. As to God, all things are present, even future; so to those, that by a lively faith partake of him. Why do I not, by that faith, see my Saviour returning in his heavenly magnificence, as truly as now I see the heaven whence he shall come? and my body as verily raised from the dust, and become glorious, as now I see it weak and decrepit, and falling into the dust?

LXXXIX.

True knowledge causeth appetite and desire; for the will follows the understanding: whatsoever that apprehends to be good for us, the effective part inclines to it. No man can have any regard to an unknown good. If a hungry man did not know that food would refresh and nourish him, or the thirsty that drink would satisfy him, or the naked that fire would warm him, or the sick that physic would recover him; none of these would affect these succours. And, according to our apprehension of the goodness and

use of these helps, so is our appetite towards them: for the object of the will is a known good; either true, or appearing so. And, if our experience can tell us of some that can say, with her in the poet, "I see and approve better things, but follow the worse;" it is not for that evil, as evil, much less as worse, can fall into the will; but, that their appetite over-carries them to a misconceit of a particular good: so as, howsoever, in a generality, they do confusedly assent to the goodness of some holy act or object; yet, upon the present occasion, here and now as the School speaketh, their sensitive appetite hath prevailed to draw them to a persuasion, that this pleasure or that profit is worthy to be embraced. Like as our first parents had a general apprehension, that it was good to obey all the commands of their Creator; but, when it came to the forbidden fruit, now their eye and their ear and their heart tell them, it is good for them, both for pleasure and for the gain of knowledge, to taste of that forbidden tree. So then, the miscarriage is not, in that they affect that, which they think not to be good; but, in that they think that to be good, which is not: for, alas, for one true good there are many seeming, which delude the soul with a fair semblance: as a man, in a generality, esteems silver above brass; but, when he meets with a rusty piece of silver, and a clear piece of brass, he chuses rather the clear brass than the silver defaced with rust. Surely, it is our ignorance, that is guilty of our cool neglect of our spiritual good: if we did know how sweet the Lord is, in his sure promises, in his unfailing mercies, we could not but long after him, and remain unsatisfied till we find him ours: would God be pleased to shine in our hearts by the light of the true knowledge of himself, we could not have cause to complain of want of heat in our affections towards his infinite goodness. Did we but know how sweet and delectable, Christ, the Heavenly Manna, is, we could not but hunger after him; and we could not hunger, and not be satisfied; and, in being satisfied, blessed.

XC.

Those, which we miscall goods, are but, in their nature, indifferent; and are either good or evil, as they are affected, as they are used. Indeed, all their malignity or virtue, is in the mind, in the hand of the possessor. Riches ill got, ill kept, ill spent, are but the mammon of iniquity; but, if well, *The crown of the wise is their riches;* Prov. xiv. 24. How can it be amiss, to have much; when he, that was the richest man of the east, was the holiest? Joh i. 1, 3. Yea, when God himself is justly styled the Possessor of Heaven and Earth? How can it be amiss, to have little; when our Saviour says, *Blessed are ye poor?* Luke vi. 20. And if, from that divine mouth, we hear a woe to the rich, himself interprets it of them, that trust in riches; Luke vi. 24. Mark x. 24. 1 Tim. vi. 17. If our riches possess us, instead of our possessing them, we have changed our God, and lost ourselves; but, if we have learnt to use our wealth, and not enjoy it, we may be no less gracious than rich. If a rich man have a large and humble heart,

and a just hand, he inherits the blessing of the poor: if a poor man have a proud heart, and a thievish hand, he carries away the woe from the rich. *Riches*, saith wise Solomon, *make themselves wings: they fly away as an eagle towards heaven;* Prov. xxiii. 5. So as we may use the matter, our souls may fly thitherward with them: If we *do good, and be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for ourselves a good foundation against the time to come, that we may lay hold on eternal life;* 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19. Let me say with Agur, *Give me neither poverty, nor riches;* Prov. xxx. 8: but whethersoever God gives, I am both thankful and indifferent; so as, while I am rich in estate, I may be poor in spirit; and, while I am poor in estate, I may be rich in grace.

XCI.

Had I been in the streets of Jericho, sure, methinks, I should have justled with Zaccheus for the sycamore, to see Jesus; and should have blessed my eyes for so happy a prospect: and yet, I consider that many a one saw his face on earth, which shall never see his glory in heaven: and I hear the Apostle say, *Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him so no more;* 2 Cor. v. 16. Oh, for the eyes of a Stephen, that *saw the heavens opened, and the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right-hand of God!* Acts vii. 55, 56. That prospect did as much transcend this of Zaccheus, as heaven is above earth; celestial glory, above human infirmity. And why should not the eyes of my faith behold the same object, which was seen by Stephen's bodily eyes? I see thee, O Saviour, I see thee; as certainly, though not so clearly. Do thou sharpen and fortify these weak eyes of mine, that in *thy light I may see light;* Psalm xxxvi. 9.

XCII.

How gracious a word was that, which God said to Israel, *I have called thee by thy name*, and *thou art mine!* Isaiah xliii. 1. He, that imposed that name upon Jacob, makes familiar use of it to his posterity. Neither is the case singular; but universally common, to all his spiritual issue. There is not one of them, whom he doth not both call by his name, and challenge for his own. *He*, that *tells the number of the stars, and calls them all by their names;* Psalm cxlvii. 4. hath also a name for every of these earthly luminaries. He, who brought all other living creatures unto man to see how he would call them and would make use of Adam's appellation, reserved the naming of Man to himself; Gen. ii. 19, 20. Neither is there any one of his innumerous posterity, whom he knows not by name. But, it is one thing, to take notice of their names; another thing, to call them by their names: that, denotes his omniscience; this, his specialty of favour: none are thus graced but the true sons of Israel. As God's children do not content themselves with a confused knowledge of a Deity, but rest not till they have attained a distinct apprehension of their God, as he hath revealed himself to man; so doth God again to them: it is not

enough, that he knows them in a general view as in the throng, wherein we see many faces, none distinctly; but he singles them out in a familiar kind of severalty, both of knowledge and respect. As, then, he hath names for the several stars of heaven; Cimah, Cesil, Mazzaroth, &c. Job ix. 9; xxxviii. 31: and for the several angels, Gabriel, Raphael, Michael, &c. and calls them by the proper names which he hath given them; so, he doth to every of his faithful ones: of one, he saith, *Thou shalt call his name John;* Luke i. 13: of another, *Thou art Simon, thou shalt be called Cephas;* John i. 42: to one he says, *Zaccheus, come down;* Luke xix. 5: to another, *Cornelius, thy prayers and thine alms are come up;* Acts x. 3, 4. In short, there is no one of his, whom he doth not both know, and call by his name. What a comfort is this to a poor wretched man, to think: "Here I walk, obscure and contemptible upon earth, in a condition mean and despised of men; but the great God of Heaven is pleased to take such notice of me, as even from heaven to call me by my name; and to single me out for grace and salvation: and not only mention my name from above, in the gracious offer of his ordinances, but to write it in the eternal register of heaven. What care I to be inglorious, yea causelessly infamous with men, while I am thus honoured by the King of Glory?"

XCIII.

It is the great wisdom and providence of the Almighty, so to order the dispositions and inclinations of men, that they affect divers and different works and pleasures: some are for manuary trades; others, for intellectual employments: one is for the land; another, for the sea: one, for husbandry; another, for merchandise: one is for architecture; another, for vestiary services: one is for fishing; another, for pasturage: and, in the learned trades, one is for the mistress of sciences, divinity; another, for the law, whether civil or municipal; a third is for the search of the secrets of nature, and the skill and practice of physic; and each one of these divides itself into many differing varieties. Neither is it otherwise, in matter of pleasures: one places his delight in following his hawk and hound; another, in the harmony of music: one makes his garden his paradise, and enjoys the flourishing of his fair tulips; another finds contentment in a choice library: one loves his bowl, or his bow; another pleases himself in the patient pastime of his angle. For, surely, if all men affected one and the same trade of life, or pleasure of recreation, it were not possible that they could live one by another: neither could there be any use of commerce, whereby man's life is maintained: neither could it be avoided, but that the envy of the inevitable rivality would cut each other's throats. It is good reason, we should make a right use of this gracious and provident dispensation of the Almighty: and, therefore, that we should improve our several dispositions and faculties to the advancing of the common stock; and, withal, that we should neither encroach upon each others' profession, nor be apt to censure each others' recreation.

XCIV.

He were very quick-sighted, that could perceive the growing of the grass, or the moving of the shadow upon the dial: yet, when those are done, every eye doth easily discern them. It is no otherwise in the progress of grace: which how it increaseth in the soul and by what degrees, we cannot hope to perceive; but, being grown, we may see it. It is the fault of many Christians, that they depend too much upon sense, and make that the judge of their spiritual estate; being too much dejected, when they do not sensibly feel the proofs of their proficiency, and the present proceedings of their regeneration: why do they not as well question the growth of their stature, because they do not see every day how much they are thriven? Surely, it must needs be, that spiritual things are less perceptible than bodily: much more, therefore, must we in these, wait upon time for necessary conviction; and well may it suffice us, if, upon an impartial comparing of the present measure of our knowledge, faith, obedience, with the former, we can perceive ourselves any whit sensibly advanced.

XCV.

The wise Christian hath learned to value every thing, according to its own worth. If we be too glad of these earthly things, it is the way to be too much afflicted with their loss; and, while we have them, to be transported into pride and wantonness: if we esteem them too little, it is the way to an unthankful disrespect of the giver. Christianity carries the heart in a just equipoise: when they come, they are welcomed without too much joy; and, when they go, they part without tears. We may smile at these earthly favours; not laugh out: we may like them; but we must take heed of being in love with them. For love, of what kind so ever it be, is not without the power of assimilation: if we love the world, we cannot but be worldly-minded; *They, that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh;* and, *to be carnally minded, is death;* Rom. viii. 5, 6: contrarily, if we love God, we are made partakers of the divine nature; and we are such as we affect. If we be Christians in earnest, certainly the inner rooms of our hearts, which are the Holy of Holies, are reserved for the Almighty: the outer courts may be for the common resort of lawful cares and desires; they may come and go; but our God shall have his fixed habitation here for ever.

XCVI.

Nature is sly and cunning: neither is it possible to take her without a shift: the light hussy *wipes her mouth*, and it was not she; Prov. xxx. 10. Rachel hath stolen her father's teraphim; and the custom of women is upon her: Saul reserves all the fat cattle of the Amalekites; it is for a sacrifice to the Lord thy God. Neither is it so only in excusing an evil done, but in waving a good to be done: *I am not eloquent*, saith Moses; *send by him, by whom thou shouldest send; Pharaoh will kill me: There is a lion in the*

way; saith the sluggard: *I have married a wife, I cannot come;* saith the sensual guest: "If I give, I shall want:" "If I make a strict profession, I shall be censured." Whereas true grace is, on the one side, downright and ingenuous in its confessions; not sparing to take shame to itself, that it may give glory to God: on the other side, resolutely constant to its holy purposes: *I and my house will serve the Lord: If I perish, I perish: I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus.* It is not hard, therefore, for us to know what mistress we serve: if our care and endeavour be, by witty evasions to shuffle off both evil and good, we are the vassals of nature; but if we shall with an humble penitence acknowledge our evil, and set ourselves with firm resolutions upon the tasks of good, we are under grace, in a way to glory.

XCVII.

It is good for a man, not always to keep his eyes at home; but, sometimes, to look abroad at his neighbours, and to compare his own condition with the worse estate of others. I know I deserve no more than the meanest, no better than the worst of men: yet how many do I see and hear, to lie groaning upon their sick beds, in great extremity of torment; whereas I walk up and down in a competency of health! How many do I see, ready to famish, and forced to either beg or starve; whereas I eat my own bread! How many lie rotting in gaols and dungeons, or are driven to wander in unknown deserts, or amongst people whose language they understand not; whereas I enjoy home and liberty! How many are shrieking under scourges and racks; whereas I sit at ease! And if I shall cast mine eyes upon my spiritual condition, alas, how many do I see sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death; whereas *the Sun of Righteousness* hath risen to me *with healing in his wings!* Mal. iv. 2. How many lie in a woeful bondage under sin and Satan; whereas my Saviour hath freed me from those hellish chains, and brought me to the glorious liberty of the sons of God! How many are miserably mis-led into the dangerous by-paths of error; whereas he hath graciously kept me in the plain and sure way of his saving truth! If we do not sometimes make these, not proud, but thankful comparisons; and look upon ourselves, not with direct beams, but by reflection upon others; we shall never be sensible enough of our own mercies.

XCVIII.

The true Christian is in a very happy condition; for no man will envy him, and he can envy no body. None will envy him; for the world cannot know how happy he is: how happy, in the favour of a God; how happy, in the enjoying of that favour. Those secret delights, that he finds in the presence of his God; those comfortable pledges of love and mutual interchanges of blessed interest, which pass between them; are not for worldly hearts to conceive: and no man will envy an unknown happiness. On the other side, he cannot envy the world's greatest favourite under

heaven; for he well knows how fickle and uncertain that man's felicity is: he sees him walking upon ice, and perceives every foot of his sliding, and threatening a fall; and hears that brittle pavement, at every step, crackling under him, and ready to give way to his swallowing up; and, withal, finds, if those pleasures of his could be constant and permanent, how poor and unsatisfying they are, and how utterly unable to yield true contentment to the soul. The Christian, therefore, while others look upon him with pity and scorn, laughs secretly to himself in his bosom; as well knowing, there is none but he truly happy.

XCIX.

It was a high and honourable embassy, whereon the angel Gabriel was sent down to the Blessed Virgin; that she should be the Mother of her Saviour: neither was that inferior, of the glorious angel, that brought the joyful tidings of the incarnation and birth of the Son of God, to the shepherds of Bethlehem: but a far more happy errand was that, which the Lord Jesus, after his resurrection, committed to the Marys; *Go to my brethren, and say to them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God, and your God;* John xx. 17. Lo, he says not, "I am risen;" but, *I ascend:* as if he had forgot the earth, whence he arose; and thought only on that heaven, whither he was going: upon his Easter, his mind is on his Ascension-day. As there had been nothing but discomfort in death, without a resurrection; so there had been little comfort in a resurrection, without an ascension to glory. There is a contentment in the very act, *I ascend:* even nature is ambitious; and we do all affect to mount higher, as to come down is a death. But this height is, like the ascendant, infinite, *I ascend to my Father:* there was the glory, which he put off in his humble incarnation; there was the glory, which he was now to resume, and possess to all eternity. And, as if nature and adoption could give a like interest, he puts both together; *My Father, and your Father: my God, and your God.* His mercy vouchsafes to style us Brethren: yet the distance is unmeasureable; betwixt him, the Son of his eternal Essence; and us, the naturally-wretched Sons of his gracious Election: yet, as if both he and we should be coheirs of the same blessedness, though not in the same measure, he says, *My Father and your Father:* first, my Father; then, yours; and, indeed, therefore ours, because his: it is in him, that we are elected, that we are adopted; without him, God were not only a stranger, but an enemy: it is the Son, that must make us free; it is the Son, that must make us sons: if we be his, the Father cannot but be ours. O the unspeakable comfort and happiness of a Christian, in respect of his bodily nature! He cannot but say, with Job, *to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister;* Job xvii. 14: in his spiritual right, God the Son hath here authorized him to say to the Almighty, *Thou art my Father;* and, in nature, in regard of our frail and dying condition, willingly say, "I descend to the grave." Faith makes abundant amends in him, and can as cheer-

fully say, *I ascend to my Father*. And what son, that is not altogether graceless, would not be glad to go to his father, though it were to a meaner house than his own; and therefore is ready to say, "I will descend to my Father?" How much more, when his many mansions are infinitely glorious, and when all our happiness consists in his blessed presence, must we needs say, with a joy unspeakable and glorious, *I ascend to my Father!*

C.

God made man the Lord of his creatures: he made him not a tyrant: he gave the creatures to man, for his lawful use; not, for his wanton cruelty. Man may therefore exercise his just sovereignty over the beasts of the field, and fowls of the air, and fishes of the sea; not his lawless will, to their needless destruction, or torment. Had man made the creature, he could but challenge an absolute dominion over that work of his hands; but, now that he is only a fellow-creature to the meanest worm, what an insolent usurpation is this, so licentiously to domineer over his fellow-dust! Yea, that great God, who gave a being to the creature, and therefore hath a full and illimited power over his own workmanship, takes no pleasure to make use of that power to the unnecessary vexation and torture of what he hath made. That all-wise and bountiful Creator, who hath put into the hands of man the subordinate dominion over all the store of these inferior elements, hath made the limit of his command, not necessity only, but convenience too: but, if man shall go beyond these bounds, and will destroy the creature only because he will, and put it to pain because it is his pleasure; he abuseth his sovereignty to a sinful imperiousness, and shall be accountable for his cruelty. When the Apostle, upon occasion of the law for not muzzling the mouth of the ox, asks, *Doth God take care for oxen?* 1 Cor. ix. 9: can we think he meant to question the regard, that God hath to so useful a creature? Do we not hear the Psalmist say, *He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens that cry?* Psalm cxlvii. 9. Do we not hear our Saviour say, That not a *sparrow falls to the ground without our Heavenly Father?* Matt. x. 29. And, of how much more value is an ox than many thousands of sparrows! Is not the speech therefore, both comparative and typical? Is the main care, that God takes in that law, for provision to be made for the beast? and doth he not rather, under that figure, give order for the maintenance of those spiritual oxen, that labour in the husbandry of the Almighty? Doubtless, as even the savage creatures, *The young lions seek their meat from God;* so they find it from him in due season: *He openeth his hand, and filleth every creature with good*; Psalm civ. 21, 27, 28. Is God so careful for preserving, and shall man be so licentious in destroying them? *A righteous man*, saith Solomon, *regardeth the life of his beast;* Prov. xii. 10: he is no better, therefore, than a wicked man, that regardeth it not. To offer violence to, and to take away the life from, our fellow-creatures, without a cause, is no less than tyranny. Surely, no other measure should a

man offer to his beast, than that, which if his beast, with Balaam's, could expostulate with him, he could well justify to it; no other, than that man, if he had been made a beast, would have been content should have been offered by man to him; no other, than he shall make account to answer to a common Creator. Justly do we smile at the niceness of the foolish Manichees, who made scruple to pull a herb or flower, and were ready to preface apologies and excuses for the reaping of their corn and grinding the grain they fed upon; as if these vegetables were sensible of pain, and capable of our oppression: but, surely, for those creatures, which, enjoying a sensitive life, forego it with no less anguish and reluctation than ourselves; and would be as willing to live, without harm, as their owners; they may well challenge both such mercy and justice at our hands, as that in the usage of them we may approve ourselves to their Maker. Wherein I blush and grieve, to see how far we are exceeded by Turks and Infidels; whom mere nature hath taught more tenderness to the poor brute creatures, than we have learned from the holier rules of charitable Christianity. For my part, let me rather affect and applaud the harmless humour of that miscalled Saint, who, in an indiscreet humility, called every wolf his brother; and every sheep, yea, every ant his sister; fellowing himself with every thing that had life in it, as well as himself: than the tyrannical disposition of those men, who take pleasure in the abuse, persecution, destruction of their fellow-creatures, upon no other quarrel, than because they live.

SUPERNUMERARIES.

BY JOSEPH, BISHOP OF NORWICH.

SUPERNUMERARIES.

I.

THERE is a satiety in all other, even the best, things, that I either have or do: I can be easily apt to complain of being wearied or cloyed with the same objects; but, in the thoughts of spiritual things, methinks, I can never have enough: for, as there is infinite scope and variety of matter, wherein to employ my meditations; so, in each one of them, there is such marvellous depth, that I should in vain hope, after all my exquisitest search, to reach unto the bottom. Yea, the more I look upon the Incomprehensible Deity, in any one of his glorious attributes; or any one of his omnipotent works, of creation, government, redemption; the more I long to see, and the less am I satisfied in seeing. And now I find cause to bless that unspeakable goodness, that he hath vouchsafed to give leave to his unworthy creatures, to contemplate those excellent glories and those saving mysteries; and think myself happy, in so gracious a liberty of exchanging these worthless thoughts of the world, for the dear and precious meditations of heavenly things: and now, how justly do I fall out with my wretched self, that I have given way to secular distractions! Since my heart can be sometimes in heaven, why should it not be always there?

II.

What is this that I see? my Saviour in an agony, and an angel strengthening him! Oh the wonderful dispensation of the Almighty! That the Eternal Son of God, who promised to send the Comforter to his followers, should need comfort! That he, of whom the voice from heaven said, *This is my well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*, should be struggling with his Father's wrath even to blood! That the Lord of Life should, in a languishing horror, say, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death!* These, these, O Saviour, are the chastisements of our peace; which both thou wouldest suffer, and thy Father would inflict. The least touch of one of those pangs would have been no less than a hell to me, the whole brunt whereof thou endnredst for my soul: what a wretch am I, to grudge a little pain from or for thee, who wert content to undergo such pressure of torment for me, as squeezed from thee a sweat of blood: since my miserable sinfulness deserved more load, than thou, in thy merciful compassion, wilt lay upon me; and thy pure nature and perfect innocence merited nothing but love and glory! In this sad case, what service is it, that an angel offers to do unto thee? Lo, there appears to thee *an angel from heaven strengthening* thee; Luke xxii. 43. Still more wonder! Art not thou the God of Spirits? Is it not thou, that gavest being, life, motion, power,

glory to all the angels of heaven? Shall there be need of one single created spirit, to administer strength and comfort to his Creator? Were this the errand, why did not all that blessed corps of celestial spirits join their forces together, in so high an employment? Where are the multitudes of that heavenly host, which, at thy birth, sung *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace?* Luke ii. 13, 14. Where are those angels, which ministered to thee, after thy combat of temptations in the wilderness? Surely, there was not so much use of their divine cordials in the desert, as in the garden. O my God and Saviour, thus thou wouldest have it. It is thy holy will, that is the rule and reason of all thine actions, and events. Thou, that wouldest make use of the provision of men for thy maintenance on earth, wouldest employ thy servants the angels for the supply of thy consolations; and thou, that couldest have commanded legions of those celestial spirits, wouldest be served by one: not, but that more were present, but that only one appeared: all the host of them ever invisibly attended thee, as God; but, as man, one only presents himself to thy bodily eyes: and thou, who madest thyself, for our sakes, *a little lower than the angels* (Heb. ii. 9.) which thou madest, wouldest humble thyself to receive comfort from those hands, to which thou gavest the capacity to bring it. It is no marvel, if that, which was thy condescent, be our glory and happiness. I am not worthy, O God, to know what conflicts thou hast ordained for my weakness: whatever they be, thou, that hast appointed thine angels to be *ministering spirits* for the behoof of them *who shall be heirs of salvation*, (Heb. i. 14.) suffer not thy servant to want the presence of those blessed emissaries of thine, in any of his extremities: let them stand by his soul, in his last agony; and, after a happy eluctation, convey it to thy glory.

III.

Many a one hath stumbled dangerously, at a wicked man's prosperity: and some have fallen desperately into that sin, which they have seen thrive in others' hands. Those carnal hearts know no other proof of good or evil, but present events; esteeming those causes holy and just, which are crowned with outward success: not considering, that it is one of the cunningest plots of hell, to win credit to bad enterprises by the fairest issues: wherein, the Devil deals with unwary men, like some cheating gamester; who, having drawn in an unskilful and wealthy novice into play, suffers him to win awhile, at the first, that he may, at the last sweep away all the stakes, and some rich manors to boot. The foolish Benjaminites, having twice won the field, begin to please themselves with a false conceit of Gibeah's honesty, and their own perpetual victories; Judges xx: but they shall soon find, that this good speed is but a pitfall, to entrap them in an ensuing destruction. It is a great judgment of God, to punish sinners with welfare; and to render their lewd ways prosperous: wherein, how contrary are the Almighty's thoughts to theirs! their seeming blessings are his heavy curse; and the smart of his stripes are a favour too good for them to enjoy. To

judge wisely of our condition, it is to be considered, not so much how we fare, as upon what terms. If we stand right with heaven, every cross is a blessing; and every blessing a pledge of future happiness: if we be in God's disfavour, every of his benefits is a judgment; and every judgment makes way for perdition. For me, let it be my care, that my disposition may be holy, and my actions righteous: let God undertake for the event.

IV.

It is no easy thing, to persuade a man that he is proud: every one professes to hate that vice; yet cherishes it secretly in his bosom. For, what is pride, but an over-weening of ourselves? and such is our natural self-love, that we can hardly be drawn to believe, that in any kind we think too well of our own. Now, this pride is ever so much more dangerous, as the thing which we over-prize is more excellent; and, as our mis-apprehension of it may be more diffusive. To be proud of gay clothes, which is childish; or, to be proud of beauty, which is a womanish vice; hath in it more fondness than malignity, and goes no further than the breast wherein it is conceived; finding no other entertainment in the beholders, than either smiles or envy: but the pride of knowledge or holy dispositions of the soul, as it is of a higher nature, so it produceth commonly more perilous effects; for as it puffs up a man above measure, so it suffers not itself to be kept within the narrow bounds of his own thoughts, but violently bursts out to the extreme prejudice of a world of men. *Only by pride cometh contention*, saith wise Solomon; Prov. xiii. 10. Even purse-pride is quarrellous, domineering over the humble neighbourhood, and raising quarrels out of trifles; but the spiritual arrogance is so much more mischievous, as the soul is beyond all earthly pelf: for, when we are once come to advance and admire our own judgments, we are first apt to hug our own inventions, then to esteem them too precious to be smothered within our own closets: the world must know of how happy an issue we are delivered, and must applaud it; or abide a contestation, and expect a challenge. The fairest paradoxes cannot pass, without a contradiction. It were strange, if some as bold and forward wits as our own should not take up the gauntlet. Now the fray is begun: the multitude is divided: sides are taken: the world is in an uproar: from skirmishes we grow to pitched fields: the Church bleeds on both parts; and it were marvel, if kingdoms could be free. But that, which most notably evinceth the deceitfulness of man's heart in this behalf, is, that this pride is too often lodged in those breasts, which are professedly devoted to a godly and mortified lowliness: for, as for those persons which are mere flesh, they are carelessly indifferent to error or truth, neither are at all moved with the success of either; but the religious mind, when it is once possessed with the conceit of some singular and important truth revealed to it and hid from the rest of the world, is ready to say with the Samaritan lepers, *I do not well; this day is a day of good tidings, and I hold my peace;* 2 Kings vii. 9. and therefore makes it matter

of conscience, to trouble the Church with a mis-grounded novelty. Come we to the test. Let me ask these mis-guided souls, that are no less confidently persuaded of their own humility than truth, can it be any other than a height of pride, for a man to think himself wiser than the whole Church of God upon earth? wiser than the whole Church of God, that hath been upon earth ever since the Apostles of Christ inclusively, in all successions to this present time? Can they, without much pride, think they can look deeper into the great mysteries of Godliness, than those blessed attendants of our Saviour; and their gracious successors, the holy martyrs, the godly and religious guides of God's Church, in all the following ages? Had not they, then, the same God, the same Scriptures, the illuminations of the same Spirit? Can they imagine it less than insolent, to attribute more to their own private opinion, than to the constant judgment and practice of the whole Christian world, in all successions of generations? Can they suppose themselves, in their single capacity, though neither prophets nor prophets' sons, meet judges or questionists of those matters of faith, which the general Councils of the purer times have unanimously agreed upon, as the main principles of Christianity? Can they think themselves privileged, by the liberty of prophesying, to coin new articles; to deface old? Surely, if the hand of pride be not in all this, I shall never desire to be acquainted with humility: so as it is too plain, that a man may be exceeding proudly, and not know it. This vicious habit lurks close in the soul; and, unless it discover itself by some scarce-discernable effects, which break out now and then, especially upon occasions of opposition, is rather more concealed from the owner, than from the eyes of a stranger. But, if ever, it bewrays itself in the affectation of undue eminence, scornful undervaluation of others' merits, obstinacy in opinion, sharpness of censures, and impatience of contradiction: of all these, the world is commonly no less guilty, than all these are guilty of the common miseries. Lord, deliver us from our pride, and our contentions will die alone.

V.

What a strange praise and privilege is that, which is given to Enoch, above all those generations of men, that peopled the first world; of whom the Spirit of God says, *Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him!* Gen. v. 24. Doubtless, amongst all those successive families of the sons of Seth, there were many religious and well-affected souls; yet there was no one of them, that had this character set upon him, that he *walked with God*, but he. Whether it were, that God did, in a more open and entire way, reveal himself to that exemplary saint; or whether that holy man did, in a more close and familiar fashion, converse with the invisible Deity; the presence was certain, and the acknowledgment mutual. Neither was this walk short, for a turn and away; but constant and continual, even for the space of three hundred years; Gen. v. 22. And what! did the blessed man retire to some desert, far from all human society, that he might enjoy this heavenly com-

pany alone? Did he, this while, cast off all secular thoughts, and abdicate all the care of his family? neither this, nor that: for, in this space, wherein he walked with his God, he both begat sons and daughters, and bred them like the children of such a father; as one, that knew to make the world subordinate, not opposite to its Maker; and had learned to reconcile the use of the creature, with the fruition of the Creator. What, then, were the steps of this walk; but pious thoughts, heavenly affections, fervent love, reverential fear, spiritual joy, holy desires, divine ravishments of spirit, strict obediences, assiduous devotions, faithful affiances, gracious engagements, firm resolutions, and effectual endeavours of good, and whatsoever might work a dearness of respect betwixt the soul and the God of Spirits? O God, that, which thou promisedst, as a reward, to those few saints of Sardis that had *not defiled their garments*, (Rev. iii. 4.) thou hast beforehand fully performed to this eminent Worthy of the first world: he walked with thee in white; in the white of innocence here, and in the shining robes of glory above: so thou hast told us, *He was not, for God took him.* Lo, being and good were wont to pass for convertible; but here, Enoch's not-being is his blessedness: he was not at all here; that he might be perfectly above. The best being on earth is but miserable: even Enoch's walk with God cannot exempt him from sorrows: he must cease to be, that he may begin to be happy. He was then happy, not for that he was not; a mere privation of being can be no other than the worst of evils: but, for that God took him: the God with whom he walked so long upon earth, takes him away from the earth to himself, for eternity. Here below, though he walked with God; yet, withal, he conversed with sinful men; whose wickedness could not but, many a time, vex his righteous soul: now, he is freed from all those spiritual annoyances; enjoying only the glorious presence and vision of the Divine Majesty, the blessed angels and the saints, co-partners of the same immortality. There can be no doubt, but that the souls of his holy predecessors, Adam, Abel, Seth, returned to the God, that gave them: but, had not Enoch been blessed with a peculiar conveyance to his glory, it had not been said, that *God took him:* were only the spirit of Enoch yielded up in the way of an ordinary death, the man had not been taken; now, whole Enoch, body and soul is translated to a heavenly life; Ecclus. xliv. 16. His father Jared and his son Methuselah went to God, in the common way of men; by a separation of the spirit from the flesh: but, for him, *God took him;* and clothed him living, with immortality. I find none but him and Elijah, that were thus fetched to their heaven. It will be happy for us, if we may pass in the common road to blessedness. O God, give me to walk close and constantly with thee, and what end thou pleasest: let my body pass through all the degrees of corruption, so that my soul may be immediately glorious.

THE

BREATHINGS

OF

THE DEVOUT SOUL.

BY JOSEPH, BISHOP OF NORWICH.

THE

BREATHINGS OF THE DEVOUT SOUL.

I.

Blessed Lord God, thou callest me to obedience; and fain would I follow thee: but what good can this wretched heart of mine be capable of, except thou put it there? Thou knowest I cannot so much as wish to think well, without thee. I have strong powers to offend thee: my sins are my own: but whence should I have any inclination to good, but from thee; who art only, and all good? Lord, work me to what thou requirest; and then, require what thou wilt.

II.

Lord God, whither need I go to seek thee? Thou art so with me, as that I cannot move but in thee. I look up to heaven: there I know thy Majesty most manifests itself; but, withal, I know, that, being here, thou art never out of thy heaven, for it is thy presence only that makes heaven. Oh, give me to enjoy thee, in this lowest region of thy heavenly habitation: and, as, in respect of my natural being, I live and move in thee; so, let me not live and move spiritually, but with thee and to thee.

III.

Whither now, O whither do ye rove, O my thoughts? Can ye hope to find rest, in any of these sublunary contentments? Alas, how can they yield any stay to you, that have no settlement in themselves? Is there not enough in the Infinite Good to take you up; but that ye will be wandering after earthly vanities? O my Lord, how justly mightest thou cast me off with scorn, for casting any affective glances upon so base a rival! Truly, Lord, I am ashamed of this my hateful inconstancy: but it is thou only, that must remedy it. O thou, that art the Father of Mercies, pity my wildness and weak distractions. Take thou my heart to thee: it is thine own: keep it with thee: tie it close to thee, by the cords of love; that it may not so much as cast down an eye upon this wretched and perishing world.

IV.

Lord, I confess, to my shame, thou art a great loser by me: for, besides my not improving of thy favours, I have not kept even-reckonings with thee: I have not justly tallied up by thy inestimable

benefits. Thy very Privative Mercies are both without and beyond my account; for every evil, that I am free from, is a new blessing from thee: that I am out of bondage, that I am out of pain and misery, that I am out of the dominion of sin, out of the tyranny of Satan, out of the agonies of an afflicted soul, out of the torments of hell; Lord, how unspeakable mercies are these! yet, when did I bless thee for any of them? Thy Positive Bounties I can feel; but with a benumbed and imperfect sense. Lord, do thou enlarge and intenerate my heart: make me truly sensible, as of my good received, so of my escaped evils; and take thou to thyself the glory of them both.

V.

Ah, my Lord God, what heats and colds do I feel in my soul! Sometimes, I find myself so vigorous in grace, that no thought of doubt dare shew itself; and, methinks, I durst challenge my hellish enemies: another while, I feel myself so dejected and heartless, as if I had no interest in the God of my Salvation, nor never had received any certain pledges of his favour. What shall I say to this various disposition? Whether, Lord, is it my wretchedness to suffer myself to be robbed of thee, for the time, by temptation? or, whether is this the course of thy proceedings, in the dispensation of thy graces, to the sons of men; that thou wilt have the breathings of thy Spirit, as where, so how, and when thou pleasest? Surely, O my God, if I did not know thee constant to thine everlasting mercies, I should be utterly disheartened with these sad intervals: now, when my sense fails me, I make use of my faith; and am no less sure of thee, even when I feel thee not, than when I find the clearest evidences of thy gracious presence. Lord, shine upon me with the light of thy countenance, if it may be, always; but, whenever that is clouded, strengthen thou my faith: so shall I be safe, even when I am comfortless.

VI.

O my God, I am justly ashamed to think what favours I have received from thee, and what poor returns I have made to thee. Truly, Lord, I must needs say, thou hast thought nothing either in earth or in heaven too good for me: and I, on the other side, have grudged thee that weak and worthless obedience, which thou hast required of me. Alas, what pleasure could I have done to thee who art infinite, if I had sacrificed my whole self to thee, as thou commandest? Thou art and wilt be thyself, though the world were not: it is I, I only, that could be a gainer by this happy match; which, in my own wrong, I have unthankfully neglected. I see it is not so much what we have, as how we employ it. O thou, that hast been so bountiful in heaping thy rich mercies upon me, vouchsafe to grant me yet one gift more: give me grace and power, to improve all thy gifts to the glory of the Giver; otherwise, it had been better for me to have been poor than ungrateful.

VII.

Ah, Lord, what struggling have I with my weak fears! How do

I anticipate my evils by distrust! What shall I do, when I am old? How shall I be able to endure pain? How shall I pass through the horrid gates of death? Oh, my God, where is my faith, that I am thus surprised? Had I not thee to uphold and strengthen my soul, well might I tremble and sink under these cares: but now, that I have the assurance of so strong a helper, as commands all the powers of heaven, earth, and hell, what a shame is it for me, to give so much way to my wretched infidelity, as to punish myself with the expectation of future evils! Oh for *the victory, that overcomes the world, even our faith!* 1 John v. 4. Thou, O *God*, art my *refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble: therefore will I not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;* Psalm xlvi. 1, 2.

VIII.

Lord, I made account my days should have been but an inch; but thou hast made them *a span long;* Psalm xxxix. 5. having drawn out the length of a crazy life, beyond the period of my hopes. It is for something, sure, that thou hast thus long respited me from my grave, which looked for me many years ago. Here I am, O my God, attending thy good pleasure. Thou knowest best what thou hast to do with me: dispose of me as thou wilt: only make me faithful, in all thy services; resolute, to trust myself with thee in all events; careful, to be approved of thee in all my ways; and crown my decayed age with such fruits, as may be pleasing to thee, and available to the good of many: lastly, let me live to thee, and die in thee.

IX.

How oft, Lord, have I wondered to see the strange carriage of thine administration of these earthly affairs! and therein to see thy marvellous wisdom, power, goodness, in fetching good out of evil! Alas, we, wretched men, are apt enough, to fetch the worst of evils out of the greatest good; *Turning the grace of* thee *our God into wantonness;* Jude 4: but, how have I seen thee, of lifeless stones to raise up children to Abraham; of sinners, to make saints! out of a desperate confusion, to fetch order; out of a bloody war, a happy peace; out of resolutions of revenge, love; out of the rock, waters; out of a persecutor, an apostle! How can I be discouraged with unlikelihoods, when I see thee work by contraries? It is not for me, O my God, to examine or prejudge thy counsels: take what ways thou wilt, so thou bring me to thine own end: all paths shall be direct, that lead me to blessedness.

X.

How many good purposes, O my God, have I taken up, and let fall to the ground again without effect! How teeming hath this barren womb of my heart been of false conceptions! But, especially, when thy hand hath been smart and heavy upon me in mine affliction, how have I tasked myself with duties, and revived my firm resolutions of more strict obedience; which yet, upon the

continuance of my better condition, I have slackened! Lord, it is from thee, that I purposed well: it is from my own sinful weakness, that I failed in my performances. If any good come from me, the will and the deed must be both thine: *The very preparations of the heart* are from thee; Prov. xvi. 1: and, if I have devised my way, it must be thou that directest my steps; Prov. xvi. 9. O God, do thou ripen and perfect all the good motions, that thou puttest into my soul; and make my health but such, as my sickness promised.

XI.

Every man, Lord, is unwilling that his name should die: we are all naturally ambitious, of being thought on when we are gone: those, that have not living monuments to perpetuate them, affect to have dead: if Absalom have not a son, he will erect a pillar. Yet, when we have all done, time eats us out at the last: *There is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now is, in the days to come shall all be forgotten;* Eccl. ii. 16. O God, let it be my care and ambition, whatever become of my memory here below, that my name may be recorded in heaven.

XII.

Thy wise Providence, O God, hath so ordered it, that every man's mind seeks and finds contentment in some thing: otherwise it could not be, since we must meet with so frequent crosses in the world, but that man's life would be burdensome to him. One takes pleasure in his hawk or hound; another, in his horses and furnitures: one, in fair buildings; another, in pleasant walks and beautiful gardens: one, in travelling abroad; another, in the enjoying of the profits and pleasures of his home: one, in a comfortable wife; another, in loving and dutiful children. But, when all is done, if there be not somewhat else to uphold the heart in the evil day, it must sink. O God, do thou possess my soul of thee: let me place all my felicity in the fruition of thine infinite goodness: so, I am sure the worst of the world hath not power to render me other than happy.

XIII.

O Lord God, under how opposite aspects do I stand, from the world! how variously am I construed by men! One pities my condition; another praises my patience: one favours me, out of the opinion of some good, that he thinks he sees in me; another dislikes me, for some imagined evil. What are the eyes or tongues of men to me? Let me not know what they say or think of me, and what am I the better or worse for them? They can have no influence upon me, without my own apprehension. All is, in what terms I stand with thee, my God: if thou be pleased to look upon me, with the eye of thy tender mercy and compassion, what care I to be unjustly brow-beaten of the world? If I may be blessed with thy favour, let me be made *a gazing-stock to the world, to angels, and to men.*

XIV.

Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth: what is it, which thou wouldest have me do, that I may find rest to my soul? I am willing to exercise myself in all the acts of piety, which thou requirest: I am ready to fast, to pray, to read, to hear, to meditate, to communicate, to give alms, to exhort, admonish, reprove, comfort where thou biddest me; and, if there be any other duty appertaining to devotion or mercy, let me serve thee in it: but, alas, O my God, howsoever I know these works are, in themselves, well-pleasing unto thee; yet, as they fall from my wretchedness, they are stained with so many imperfections, that I have more reason to crave pardon for them, than to put confidence in them; and if I could perform them never so exquisitely, yet one sin is more than enough to dash all my obedience. I see, then, O Lord, I well see, there is no act, that I can be capable to do unto thee, wherein I can find any repose: it must be thine act to me, which only can effect it. It is thy gracious word, *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;* Matth. xi. 28. Lo, this rest must be thy gift; not my earning: and what can be freer, than gift? Thou givest it then, but to those, that come to thee; not to those, that come not: to those, that come to thee laden and labouring under the sense of their own wretchedness; not to the proud and careless. O Saviour, thy sinner is sufficiently laden, with the burden of his iniquities: lade thou me yet more, with true penitent sorrow for my sins; and enable me then to come unto thee, by a lively faith. Take thou the praise of thine own work, Give me the grace to come; and give me rest, in coming.

XV.

O Blessed Saviour, what strange variety of conceits do I find concerning thy thousand years' reign! What riddles are in that prophecy, which no human tongue can aread! Where to fix the beginning of that marvellous millenary, and where the end; and what manner of reign it shall be, whether temporal or spiritual, on earth or in heaven; undergoes as many constructions, as there are pens that have undertaken it: and yet, when all is done, I see thine Apostle speaks only of the souls of thy martyrs, reigning so long with thee; not of thy reigning on earth so long, with those martyrs. How busy are the tongues of men, how are their brains taken up, with the indeterminable construction of this enigmatical truth; when, in the mean time, the care of thy spiritual reign in their hearts is neglected! O my Saviour, while others weary themselves with the disquisition of thy personal reign here upon earth for a thousand years, let it be the whole bent and study of my soul, to make sure of my personal reign with thee in heaven to all eternity.

XVI.

Blessed be thy name, O God, who hast made a good use even

of hell itself. How many atheous hearts have been convinced, by the very operations of devils! Those, which would, with the stupid Sadducees, persuade themselves there are no spirits; yet, when they have sensibly found the marvellous effects wrought even by the base instruments of Satan, they have been forced to confess, *Doubtless there is a God that rules the world:* for, so great powers of evil spirits must necessarily evince the greater powers of good. It is of thy wise and holy dispensation, that thy good angels do not so frequently exhibit themselves, and give so visible demonstrations of their presence to thy saints, as the evil angels do to their vassals, though they are ever as present and more powerful. What need they, when thou so mightily overrulest those malignant spirits, that thou forcest from them thine own glory, and advantage to thy chosen? Lord, how much more shall all thy other creatures serve to thy praise, when thy very hellish enemies shall proclaim thy justice, goodness, omnipotence!

XVII.

Speculation, O Lord, is not more easy, than practice is difficult. How many have we known, who, as it was said of the philosophers of old, know how to speak well, but live ill! How many have written books of chemistry, and given very confident directions for the finding out of that precious stone of the philosophers! but how many have indeed made gold? Practice is that, which thou, O God, chiefly requirest and respectest; who hast said, *If ye know these things, blessed are ye if you do them: Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth;* 1 Cor. viii. 1. O Lord, do thou enlighten mine eyes with the knowledge of thy will: but, above all, do thou rectify my affections; *guide my feet into the ways of thy commandments; apply my heart to fulfil thy statutes alway;* Psalm cxix. 35, 112. and *prosper thou the work of* my *hands upon* me, *O prosper thou* my *handy-work;* Psalm xc. 17.

XVIII.

How oft have I wondered, O Lord, at the boldness of those men, who, knowing they must shortly die, yet dare do those things, which will draw upon them eternity of torments! What shall I say, but, *The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God?* Surely, men love themselves well enough; and would be loth to do that, which would procure them an inevitable misery and pain. Did they, therefore, believe there were another world, and that they must be called to a strict reckoning for all their actions, and be doomed to an everlasting death for their wicked deeds, they durst not, they could not do those acts, which should make them eternally miserable. Let me say to the most desperate ruffian, "There is poison in this cup: drink this draught, and thou diest;" he would have the wit to keep his lips close, and cast the potion to the ground: were it not for their infidelity, so would men do, to the most plausible, but deadly, offers of sin. O Lord, since I know thy righteous judgments, teach me to tremble at them: restrain

thou my feet from every evil way; and teach me so to walk, as one, that looks every hour to appear before thy just and dreadful Tribunal.

XIX.

The longer I live, O my God, the more do I wonder at all the works of thy hands. I see such admirable artifice in the very least and most despicable of all thy creatures, as doth every day more and more astonish my observation. I need not look so far as heaven, for matter of marvel, though therein thou art infinitely glorious; while I have but a spider in my window, or a bee in my garden, or a worm under my feet: every one of these overcomes me with a just amazement: yet can I see no more than their very outsides; their inward form, which gives their being and operations, I I cannot pierce into. The less I can know, O Lord, the more let me wonder; and the less I can satisfy myself with marvelling at thy works, the more let me adore the majesty and omnipotence of thee, that wroughtest them.

XX.

Alas, my Lord God, what poor, weak, imperfect services are those, even at the best, that I can present thee withal! How lean, lame, and blemished sacrifices, do I bring to thine altar! I know thou art worthy of more than my soul is capable to perform; and fain would I tender thee the best of thine own: but, *what I would, that I do not;* Rom. vii. 15: yea, cannot do. Surely, had I not to do with an infinite mercy, I might justly look to be punished for my very obedience. But now, Lord, my impotence redounds to the praise of thy goodness: for, were I more answerable to thy justice, the glory of thy mercy would be so less eminent in my remission and acceptance. Here I am before thee, to await thy good pleasure: thou knowest whether it be better to give me more ability, or to accept of that poor ability thou hast given me; but since when thou hast given me most, I shall still and ever stand in need of thy forgiveness; let my humble suit be to thee always, rather for pardon of my defects, than for a supply of thy graces.

XXI.

O my God, how do I see many profane and careless souls spend their time in jollity and pleasure! *The harp, and the viol, the tabret and the pipe, and wine, are in their feasts;* Isaiah v. 12. while I, that desire to walk close with thee, in all conscionable obedience, droop and languish under a dull heaviness, and heartless dejection. I am sure I have a thousand times more cause of joy and cheerfulness, than the merriest of all those wild and jovial spirits: they have a world to play withal; but I have a God to rejoice in: their sports are trivial and momentary; my joy is serious and everlasting: one dram of my mirth is worth a pound of theirs. But, I confess, O Lord, how much I am wanting to myself, in not stirring up this holy fire of spiritual joy; but suffering it to lie raked up, under the dead ashes of a sad neglect. O thou, who art the God of Hope, quicken this heavenly affection in my soul; and

fill me *with all joy and peace in believing ;* Rom. xv. 13. Make my heart so much more light than the worldling's, by how much my estate is happier.

XXII.

What shall I do, Lord? I strive and tug, what I may, with my natural corruptions; and with the *spiritual wickednesses in high places*, (Eph. vi. 12.) which set upon my soul: but, sometimes, I am foiled; and go halting out of the field. It is thy mercy that I live, being so fiercely assaulted by those principalities and powers: it were more than wonder, if I should escape such hands, without a wound. Even that holy servant of thine, who strove with thine angel for a blessing, went limping away, though he prevailed: what marvel is it, that so weak a wretch as I, striving with many evil angels for the avoidance of a curse, come off with a maim or a scar? But, blessed be thy name, the wounds, that I receive, are not mortal; and, when I fall, it is but to my knees: whence I rise with new courage and hopes of victory. Thou, who art the God of all Power, and keepest the keys of hell and death, hast said, *Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you :* Lord, I do and will, by thy merciful aid, still and ever resist: make thou my faith as stedfast, as my will is resolute. Oh, still *teach thou my hands to war, and my fingers to fight ;* Psalm cxliv. 1. Arm thou my soul with strength; and, at last, according to thy gracious promise, crown it with victory.

XXIII.

O Lord God, how ambitious, how covetous of knowledge, is this soul of mine! As *the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing ;* Eccl. i. 8. no more is the mind of man with understanding: yea, so insatiable is my heart, that the more I know, the more I desire to know, and the less I think I know. Under heaven, there can be no bounds set to this intellectual appetite. Oh, do thou stop the mouth of my soul with thyself, who art Infinite. *Whom have I in heaven, but thee? and there is none upon earth, that I desire besides thee ;* Psalm lxxiii. 25. Alas, Lord, if I could know all creatures, with all their forms, qualities, workings; if I could know as much as innocent Adam, or wise Solomon; yea more, if I could know all that is done in earth or heaven; what were my soul the better, if it have not attained the knowledge of thee? Since, as the Preacher hath most wisely observed, *In much wisdom is much grief ; and he, that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow ;* Eccl. i. 18. Oh, then, set off my heart from affecting that knowledge, whose end is sorrow; and fix it upon that knowledge, which brings everlasting life: *And this is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God ; and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent ;* John xvii. 3.

XXIV.

O my God, what miserable uncertainties there are, in these worldly hopes! But yesterday, I made account of an eminent advantage of my estate, which now ends in a deep loss. How did we lately feed ourselves with the hope of a firm and during peace,

which now shuts up in too much blood! How confidently did I rely upon the promised favour of some great friends, which now leave me in the suds, as the scorn of (a miscalled) fortune! In how slippery places, O Lord, do our feet stand! if that may be said to stand, which is ever sliding, never fixed: and not more slippery, than brittle; so as there is not more danger of falling, than of sinking. With thee, O God, with thee only is a constant immutability of happiness: there, let me seek it; there, let me find it: and, over-looking all the fickle objects of this vain world, let my soul pitch itself upon that blessed Immortality, which, ere long, it hopes to enjoy with thee.

XXV.

Lord God, what a wearisome circle do I walk in here below! I sleep, and dress, and work, and eat, and work again, and eat again, and undress, and sleep again; and, thus wearing out my time, find a satiety in all these, troublesome. Lord, when shall I come to that state, wherein I shall do nothing but enjoy thee, do nothing but praise thee; and, in that one work, shall find such infinite contentment, that my glorified soul cannot wish to do any other: and shall therein alone bestow a blessed eternity?

XXVI.

O God, how troublesome and painful do I find this sun of thine, whose scorching beams beat upon my head! and yet this excellent creature of thine is that, to which, under thee, we are beholden for our very life; and it is thy great blessing to the earth, that it may enjoy these strong and forcible rays from it. Oh, who shall be able to endure the burning flames of thy wrath, which thou intendest for the punishment and everlasting torment of thine enemies? And if men shall blaspheme the Name of thee, the God of Heaven, (Rev. xvi. 9.) for the great heat of that beneficial creature, what shall we think they will do for that fire, which shall be consuming them to all eternity? Lord, keep my soul from those flames, which shall be ever burning, and never either quenched or abated.

XXVII.

Which way, O Lord, which way can I look, and not see some sad examples of misery? One wants his limbs, with Mephibosheth; another, his sight, with Bartimeus; a third, with Lazarus, wants bread and a whole skin: one is pained in his body; another, plundered of his estate; a third, troubled in mind: one is pined in prison; another, tortured on the rack; a third, languisheth under the loss of a dear son, or wife, or husband. Who am I, Lord, that, for the present, I enjoy an immunity from all these sorrows? I am sure, none groans under them, that have deserved them more. It is thy mercy, thy mere mercy, O my good God, that any of these calamities have fallen beside me. Oh, make me truly thankful for thine infinite goodness; and yet only so sensible of thy gracious indulgence this way, as that when any of these evils shall seize upon me, I may be no more dejected in the sense of them, than I am now overjoyed with the favour of their forbearance.

XXVIII.

O Blessed God, what variety of gifts hast thou scattered amongst the sons of men! To one, thou hast given vigour of body; to another, agility; beauty, to a third: to one, depth of judgment; to another, quickness of apprehension: to one, readiness and rarity of invention; to another, tenacity of memory: to one, the knowledge of liberal arts; to another, the exquisiteness of manuary skill: to one, worldly wealth; to another, honour: to one, a wise heart; to another, an eloquent tongue: to one, more than enough; to another, contentment with a little: to one, valour; to another, sagacity. These favours, O Lord, thou hast promiscuously dispersed, amongst both thy friends and enemies: but, Oh! how transcendant are those spiritual mercies, which thou hast reserved for thine own; the graces of heavenly wisdom, lively faith, fervent charity, firm hope, joy in the Holy Ghost, and all the rest of that divine bevy! For any competency of the least of thy common blessings, I desire to be thankful to thy bounty; for which of them, O God, can I either merit or requite? but, Oh for a soul truly and eagerly ambitious of those thy best mercies! Oh, let me ever long for them, and ever be insatiable of them. Oh, do thou fill my heart with the desire of them, and let that desire never find itself filled.

XXIX.

How comfortable a style is that, O God, which thine Apostle gives to thy heaven, while he calls it *The inheritance of the saints in light!* None can come there, but Saints: the rooms of this lower world are taken up, commonly, with wicked men, with beasts, with devils; but, into that heavenly Jerusalem, no unholy thing can enter. Neither can any Saint be excluded thence: each of them have, not only a share, but an entire right to thy glory. And how many just titles are there, O Saviour, to that region of blessedness! It is thy Father's gift: it is thy purchase: it is thy Saints' Inheritance; theirs, only in thy right; by thy gracious adoption they are sons, and, as sons, heirs, co-heirs with thee of that blessed patrimony; Rom viii. 17. so feoffed upon them, so possessed of them, that they can never be disseised. And, Lord, how glorious an inheritance it is! An inheritance in light, in light incomprehensible, in light inaccessible. Lo, the most spiritual of all thy visible creatures is light; and yet this light is but the effect and emanation of one of thy creatures the sun, and serves only for the illumination of this visible world: but that supernal light is from the all-glorious beams of thy Divine Majesty, diffusing themselves to those blessed spirits, both angels and souls of thy saints, who live in the joyful fruition of thee to all eternity. Alas, Lord, we do here dwell in darkness, and under an uncomfortable opacity, while thy face is clouded from us with manifold temptations: there above, with thee is pure light, a constant noon-tide of glory: I am here under a miserable and obscure wardship. Oh, teach me to despise the best of earth; and ravish my soul with a longing desire, of being possessed of that blessed *inheritance of the saints in light.*

XXX.

What outward blessing can be sweeter, than civil peace? what judgment more heavy, than that of the sword? Yet, O Saviour, there is a peace, which thou disclaimest; and there is a sword, which thou challengest to bring: peace with our corruptions, is war against thee; and that war in our bosoms, wherein the Spirit fighteth against the Flesh, is peace with thee. Oh, let thy Good Spirit raise and foment this holy and intestine war, more and more, within me. And, as for my outward spiritual enemies, how can there be a victory, without war? and how can I hope for a crown, without victory? Oh, do thou ever gird me with strength to the battle: enable thou me to resist unto blood: make me faithful to the death, that thou mayest give me the crown of life.

XXXI.

O Lord God, how subject is this wretched heart of mine to repining and discontentment! If it may not have what it would, how ready it is, like a froward child, to throw away what it hath! I know and feel this to be out of that natural pride, which is so deep rooted in me; for, could I be sensible enough of my own unworthiness, I should think every thing too good, every thing too much for me. My very being, O Lord, is more than I am ever able to answer thee; and how could I deserve it, when I was not? but, that I have any helps of my well-being here, or hopes and means of my being glorious hereafter, how far is it beyond the reach of my soul! Lord, let me find my own Nothingness: so shall I be thankful for a little; and, in my very want, bless thee.

XXXII.

Where art thou, O my God? Whither hast thou withdrawn thyself? It is not long, since I found thy comfortable presence with my soul: now, I miss thee, and mourn and languish for thee. Nay, rather, where art thou, O my soul? My God is, where he was; neither can be any other, than himself: the change is in thee, whose inconstant disposition varies continually, and cannot find itself fixed upon so blessed an object. It will never be better with me, O my God, until it shall please thee to *stablish my heart with thy free Spirit;* Psalm li. 12. and to keep it close to thee, that it may not be carried away with vain distractions, with sinful temptations. Lord, my God, as thou art always present with me, and canst no more be absent than not be thyself; so let me be always with thee, in an humble and faithful acknowledgment of thy presence: as I can never be out of thine all-seeing eye; so let mine eyes be ever bent upon thee, who art invisible. Thou, that hast given me eyes, improve them to thy glory and my happiness.

XXXIII.

My bosom, O Lord, is a Rebekah's womb: there are twins striv-

ing within it; a Jacob, and Esau; the Old man, and the New. While I was in the barren state of my unregeneration, all was quiet within me: now, this strife is both troublesome and painful; so as nature is ready to say, *If it be so, why am I thus?* Gen. xxv. 22. But, withal, O my God, I bless thee for this happy unquietness; for I know there is just cause of comfort in these inward strugglings: my soul is now not unfruitful; and is conceived with a holy seed, which wrestles with my natural corruptions; and, if my Esau have got the start in the priority of time, yet my Jacob shall follow him hard at the heel, and happily supplant him; and, though I must nourish them both, as mine, yet I can, through thy grace, imitate thy choice, and say with thee, *Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated.* Blessed God, make thou that word of thine good in me, that *the elder shall serve the younger.*

XXXIV.

Alas, my Lord God, how small matters trouble me! every petty occurrence is ready to rob me of my peace; so as, methinks, I am like some little cock-boat in a rough sea, which every billow topples up and down, and threats to sink. I can chide this weak pusillanimity in myself: but it is thou, that must redress it. Lord, work my heart to so firm a settledness upon thee, that it may never be shaken; no, not with the violent gusts of temptation, much less with the easy gales of secular mis-accidents. Even when I am hardest pressed in the multitude of the sorrows of my heart, let thy comforts refresh my soul: but for these slight crosses, oh teach me to despise them; as not worthy of my notice, much less of my vexation. Let my heart be taken up with thee; and then, what care I, whether the world smile or frown?

XXXV.

What a comfort it is, O Saviour, that thou art *the first-fruits of them that sleep!* Those, that die in thee, do but sleep. Thou saidst so once of thy Lazarus, and mayest say so of him again: he doth but sleep still. His first sleep was but short; this latter, though longer, is no less true: out of which, he shall no less surely awake, at thy second call; than he did before, at thy first. His first sleep and waking was singular; this latter is the same with ours: we all lie down in our bed of earth, as sure to wake, as ever we can be to shut our eyes. In and from thee, O Blessed Saviour, is this our assurance, who art *the first fruits of them that sleep.* The first handful of the first-fruits was not presented for itself; but for the whole field, wherein it grew: the virtue of that oblation extended itself to the whole crop. Neither didst thou, O Blessed Jesu, rise again for thyself only; but the power and virtue of thy resurrection reaches to all thine: so thy Chosen Vessel tells us, *Christ the first-fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming;* 1 Cor. xv. 23. So as, though the *resurrection be of all the dead, both just and unjust;* Acts xxiv. 15. yet, to rise by the power of thy resur-

rection, is so proper to thine own, as that thou, O Saviour, hast stiled it the *resurrection of the just;* Luke xiv. 14. while the rest shall be dragged out of their graves, by the power of thy Godhead, to their dreadful judgment. Already, therefore, O Jesu, are we risen in thee; and as sure shall rise in our own persons. The locomotive faculty is in the head: thou, who art our Head, art risen; we, who are thy members, must and shall follow. Say then, O my dying body, say boldly unto death, *Rejoice not over me, O mine enemy, for though I fall, yet I shall rise again;* Micah vii. 8. Yea, Lord, the virtue of thy first-fruits diffuseth itself, not to our rising only, but to a blessed immortality of these bodies of ours: for, as thou didst rise immortal and glorious, so shall we by and with thee; *Who shall change these vile bodies, and make them like to thy glorious body;* Phil. iii. 21. The same power, that could shake off death, can put on glory and majesty. Lay thee down, therefore, O my body, quietly and cheerfully; and look to rise, in another hue: thou art *sown in corruption,* thou shalt be *raised in incorruption;* thou art *sown in dishonour,* thou shalt be *raised in glory;* thou art *sown in weakness,* but shalt be *raised in power;* 1 Cor. xv. 42, 43.

XXXVI.

In this life, in this death of the body, O Lord, I see there are no degrees, though differences of time. The man, that died yesterday, is as truly dead; as Abel, the first man that died in the world: and Methuselah, that lived nine hundred sixty-nine years, did not more truly live; than the child, that did but salute and leave the world. But, in the life to come, and the second death, there are degrees: degrees of blessedness, to the glorified; degrees of torments, to the damned; the least whereof is unspeakable, unconceivable. O thou, that art the Lord of Life and Death, keep my soul from those steps, that go down to the chambers of death; and once set it, for higher I dare not sue to go, but over the threshold of glory and blessedness.

XXXVII.

O Lord my God, I am as very a pilgrim, as ever walked upon thy earth: why should I look to be in any better condition, than my neighbours, than my forefathers? Even the best of them, that were most fixed upon their inheritance, were no other than strangers at home: it was not in the power of the world to naturalize them; much less, to make them enrol themselves free denizens here below: they knew their country, which they sought, was above; so infinitely rich and pleasant, that these earthly regions, which they must pass through, are, in comparison, worthy of nothing but contempt; Heb. xi. 13, 14, 15. My condition is no other than theirs: I wander here, in a strange country; what wonder is it, if I meet with foreigners' fare, hard usage and neglect? Why do I intermeddle with the affairs of a nation, that is not mine? Why do I clog myself, in my way, with the base and heavy lumber of the world? Why are not my affections homeward? Why do I not

long to see and enjoy my Father's house? O my God, thou, that hast put me into the state of a pilgrim, give me a pilgrim's heart: set me off from this wretched world, wherein I am: let me hate to think of dwelling here: let it be my only care, how to pass through this miserable wilderness, to the promised land of a blessed eternity.

XXXVIII.

One talent at the least, O Lord, hast thou put into my hand; and that sum is great to him, that is not worth a dram: but, alas, what have I done with it? I confess I have not hid it in a napkin; but have been laying it out to some poor advantage: yet, surely, the gain is so unanswerable, that I am afraid of an audit. I see none of the approved servants in the Gospel brought in an increase of less value than the receipt; Luke xix. 16—19: I fear I shall come short of the sum. O thou, who justly holdest thyself wronged with the style of *an austere Master*, vouchsafe to accept of my so mean improvement; and thou, who valuedst the poor widow's mites above the rich gifts cast into thy treasury, be pleased to allow of those few pounds, that my weak endeavours could raise from thy stock; and mercifully reward thy servant, not according to his success, but according to his true intentions of glorifying thee.

XXXIX.

What a word is this, which I hear from thee, O Saviour, *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock!* Thou, which art the Lord of Life, God blessed for ever, to stand and knock at the door of a sinful heart! Oh, what a praise is this of thy mercy and long suffering! What a shame to our dull neglect and graceless ingratitude! For a David to say, *I waited patiently upon the Lord;* Psalm xl. 1. *Truly my soul waited upon God;* Psalm lxii. 1. it is but meet and comely; for it is no other than the duty of the greatest monarchs on earth, yea, of the highest angels in heaven, to attend their Maker: but for thee, the great God of Heaven, to wait at the door of us sinful dust and ashes, what a condescension is this! what a longanimity! It were our happiness, O Lord, if, upon our greatest suit and importunity, we might have the favour to entertain thee into our hearts; but, that thou shouldest importune us to admit thee, and shouldest wait at the posts of our doors, till thy *head* be *filled with dew*, *and* thy *locks with the drops of the night*, (Cant. v. 2.) it is such a mercy, as there is not room enough in our souls to wonder at. In the mean time, what shall I say to our wretched unthankfulness, and impious negligence? Thou hast graciously invited us to thee, and hast said, *knock and it shall be opened;* and yet thou continuest knocking at our doors, and we open not; willingly delaying to let in our happiness. We know how easy it were for thee, to break open the brazen doors of our breasts, and to come in; but the Kingdom of Heaven suffers not violence from thee, though it should suffer it from us. Thou wilt do all thy works, in a sweet and gracious way; as one, who will not force, but win love. Lord, I can-

not open, unless thou, that knockest for entrance, wilt be pleased to enable me with strength to turn the key, and to unbolt this unwieldy bar of my soul. O do thou make way for thyself, by the strong motions of thy Blessed Spirit; into the inmost rooms of my heart; and do thou powerfully incline me to mine own happiness: else, thou shalt be ever excluded, and I shall be ever miserable.

XL.

In what pangs couldst thou be, O Asaph, that so woeful a word should fall from thee, *Hath God forgotten to be gracious?* Psalm lxxvii. 9. Surely, the temptation went so high, that the next step had been blasphemy. Had not that good God, whom thy bold weakness questions for forgetfulness, in great mercy remembered thee, and brought thee speedily to remember thyself and him; that, which thou confessest to have been infirmity, had proved a sinful despair. I dare say for thee, that word washed thy cheeks with many a tear; and was worthy of more: for, O God, what can be so dear to thee, as the glory of thy mercy? There is none of thy blessed attributes, which thou desirest to set forth so much unto the sons of men, and so much abhorrest to be disparaged by our detraction, as thy Mercy. Thou canst, O Lord, forget thy displeasure against thy people; thou canst forget our iniquities, and cast our sins out of thy remembrance; Micah vii. 18, 19: but thou canst no more forget to be gracious, than thou canst cease to be thyself. O my God, I sin against thy justice hourly, and thy mercy interposes for my remission: but, oh, keep me from sinning against thy mercy. What plea can I hope for, when I have made my advocate mine enemy?

XLI.

How happy, O Lord, is the man, that hath thee for his God! He can want nothing, that is good; he can be hurt by nothing, that is evil: his sins are pardoned; his good endeavours are accepted; his crosses are sanctified; his prayers are heard: all, that he hath, are blessings; all, that he suffers, are advantages: his life is holy; his death, comfortable; his estate after death, glorious. Oh, that I could feel thee to be my God, that I could enjoy a heavenly communion with thee! In vain should earth or hell labour to make me other than blessed.

XLII.

How just a motion is this of thine, O thou sweet singer of Israel, *O love the Lord, all ye his saints!* Psalm xxxi. 23. Surely, they can be no Saints, that love not such a Lord. Had he never been good to them, yet that infinite goodness, which is in himself, would have commanded love from Saints. Yet, how could they have been Saints, if he had wholly kept his goodness to himself? In that then he hath made them Saints, he hath communicated his goodness to them, and challengeth all love from them; and, being made such, how infinitely hath he obliged them with all kinds of mercies! How can ye choose, O ye Saints, but love the Lord? What have ye, what are ye, what can ye be, but from his mere bounty? They are

slight favours, that he hath done you for the world; in these, his very enemies share with you: how transcendent are his spiritual obligations! Hath he not given you his angels, for your attendants; Himself, for your Protector; his Son out of his bosom, for your Redeemer; his Spirit, for your Comforter; his heaven, for your inheritance? If gifts can attract love, O my God, who can have any interest in my heart, but thy blessed self, that hast been so infinitely munificent to my soul? Take it to thee, thou, that hast made and bought it: enamour it thoroughly of thy goodness: make me sick of love; yea, let me die for love of thee, who hast loved me unto death, that I may fully enjoy the perfection of thy love, in the height of thy glory.

XLIII.

Lord, how have I seen men miscarried into those sins, the premonition whereof they would have thought incredible, and their yieldance thereto impossible! How many Hazaels hath our very age yielded; that, if a Prophet should have foretold their acts, would have said, *Is thy servant a dog, that he should do these great things?* 2 Kings viii. 13. O my God, why do not I suspect myself? What hold have I of myself, more than these other miserable examples of human frailty? Lord God, if thou take off thy hand from me, what wickedness shall escape me? I know I cannot want a tempter; and that tempter cannot want either power, or malice, or vigilance, or skill, or baits, or opportunities; and, for myself, I find too well, that of myself I have no strength to resist any of his temptations. Oh, for thy mercy's sake, uphold thou me with thy mighty hand: stand close to me, in all assaults: shew thyself strong, in my weakness: *Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins: let them not have dominion over me; then*, only, *shall I be upright, and shall be innocent from the great transgression*, Psalm xix. 13.

XLIV.

It is thy title, O Lord, and only thine, that thou givest *songs in the night;* Job xxxv. 10. The night is a sad and dolorous season; as the light, contrarily, is the image of cheerfulness; Eccl. xi. 7: like as it is in bodily pains and aches, that they are still worst towards night; so it is in the cares and griefs of mind: then they assault us most, when they are helped on by the advantage of an uncomfortable darkness. Many men can give themselves songs in the day of their prosperity, who can but howl in the night of their affliction: but, for a Paul and Silas to sing in their prison at midnight; Acts xvi. 25. for an Asaph to *call to remembrance* his *song in the night;* Psalm lxxvii. 6. this comes only from that Spirit of thine, whose peculiar style is the *Comforter*. And, surely, as music sounds best in the night; so those heavenly notes of praise, which we sing to thee, our God, in the gloomy darkness of our adversity, cannot but be most pleasing in thine ears. Thine Apostle bids us, which is our ordinary wont, when we are *merry* to *sing;* when *afflicted*, to *pray:* but if when we are afflicted we can sing, as also when we are merriest we can pray, that ditty must needs be

so much more acceptable to thee, as it is a more powerful effect of the joy of thy Holy Ghost. O my God, I am conscious of my own infirmity: I know I am naturally subject to a dull and heavy dumpishness, under whatsoever affliction. Thou, that art the God of all Comfort, remedy this heartless disposition in me: pull this lead out of my bosom: make me, not patient only, but cheerful, under my trials: fill thou my heart with joy, and my mouth with songs, in the night of my tribulation.

XLV.

It is a true word, O Lord, that thy Seer said of thee, long ago: *The Lord seeth not as man seeth;* 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Man sees the face; thou seest the heart: man sees things, as they seem; thou seest them, as they are: many things are hid from the eyes of men; all things lie open and displayed before thee. What a madness, then, were it in me, to come disguised into thy presence; and to seek to hide my counsels from thine all-seeing eyes! I must be content, Lord, to be deluded here by fair appearances; for I may not offer to look into the bosoms of men, which thou hast reserved for thyself: it is only the outside, that I can judge by. Yea, O God, if I shall cast my eyes inward, and look into my own breast, even there I find myself baffled, at home: *The heart of man is deceitful above all things: who can know it?* None, but those piercing eyes of thine, can discover all the windings and turnings of that intricate piece. What would it avail me, O Lord, to mock the eyes of all the world with a semblance of holiness, whilst thou shouldest see me false and filthy? Should I be censured by a world of men, when I am secretly allowed by thee, I could contemn it; yea, glory in their unjust reproach: but, if thine eye shall note me guilty, to what purpose is all the applause of men? O thou, that art the God of Truth, do thou open and dissect this close heart of mine: search every fibre, that is in or about it; and, if thou findest any ill blood there, let it out; and, if thou findest any hollowness, fill it up: and so work upon it, that it may be approved of thee, that madest it: as for men, it shall be alike to me, whether they spend their breath or save it.

XLVI.

Lord God, what a world of treasure hast thou hid in the bowels of the earth, which no eye of man ever did, or shall, or can see! What goodly plants hast thou brought forth of the earth, in wild, unknown regions, which no man ever beheld! What great wits hast thou shut up in a willing obscurity, which the world never takes notice of! In all which, thou shewest, that it is not only the use and benefit of man, which thou regardest, in the great variety of thy creation, and acts of administration of the world; but thine own glory, and the fulfilling of thine own good pleasure: and, if only the angels of heaven be witnesses of thy great works, thou canst not want a due celebration of thy praise. It is just with thee, O God, that thou shouldest regard only thy blessed self, in all that thou doest, or hast done; for all is thine, and thou art all. Oh, that

I could sincerely make thee the perfect scope of all my thoughts, of all my actions; that so we may both meet in one and the same happy end, thy glory in my eternal blessedness.

XLVII.

Indeed, Lord, as thou sayest, *the night cometh when no man can work*. What can we do, when the light is shut in; but shut our eyes, and sleep? When our senses are tied up, and our limbs laid to rest, what can we do; but yield ourselves to a necessary repose? O my God, I perceive my night hastening on apace: my sun draws low: the shadows lengthen: vapours rise; and the air begins to darken. Let me bestir myself, for the time: let me lose none of my few hours: let me work hard, awhile; because I shall soon rest everlastingly.

XLVIII.

Thou seest, Lord, how apt I am to contemn this body of mine. Surely, when I look back upon the stuff whereof it is made, no better than that I tread upon; and see the loathsomeness of all kinds, that comes from it; and feel the pain, that it ofttimes puts me to; and consider whither it is going; and how noisome it is, above all other creatures, upon the dissolution: I have much ado to hold good terms with so unequal a partner. But, on the other side, when I look up to thy hand, and see how fearfully and wonderfully thou hast made it; what infinite cost thou hast bestowed upon it, in that thou hast not thought thine own blood too dear to redeem it; that thou hast so far honoured it, as to make it the temple of thy Holy Ghost, and to admit it into a blessed communion with thyself; and hast decreed to do so great things for it hereafter, even to clothe it with immortality, and to make it like unto thy glorious body; I can bless thee for so happy a mate, and with patience digest all these necessary infirmities: and now I look upon this flesh, not as it is, withered and wrinkled; but as it will be, shining and glorified. O Lord, how vile soever this clay is in itself; yet make me, in thine interest and my hopes, so enamoured of it, as if I did already find it made celestial. Oh, that my faith could prevent my change, and anticipate my ensuing glory!

XLIX.

Lord, what a dreadful favour was that, which thou shewedst to thy Prophet Elijah; to send a fiery chariot for him, to convey him up to heaven! I should have thought, that the sight of so terrible a carriage should have fetched away his soul beforehand, and have left the body grovelling on the earth: but that Good Spirit of thine, which had fore-signified that fiery rapture, had doubtless fore-armed thy servant with an answerable resolution to expect and undergo it. Either he knew that chariot, however fearful in the appearance, was only glorious, and not penal; or else he cheerfully resolved, that such a momentary pain in the change would be followed with an eternity of happiness. O God, we are not worthy to know whereto thou hast reserved us. Perhaps thou hast appointed us to

be in the number of those, whom thou shalt find alive at thy Second Coming; and then, the case will be ours; we shall pass through fire to our immortality: or, if thou hast ordained us to a speedier dispatch, perhaps thou hast decreed that our way to thee shall be through a fiery trial. O God, whatever course thou, in thy holy wisdom, hast determined for the fetching up my soul from this vale of misery and tears, prepare me thoroughly for it: and do thou work my heart to so lively a faith in thee, that all the terrors of my death may be swallowed up, in an assured expectation of my speedy glory; and that my last groans shall be immediately seconded with eternal Hallelujahs, in the glorious Choir of thy Saints and Angels in Heaven. Amen. Amen.

SUSURRIUM CUM DEO.

SOLILOQUIES:

OR,

HOLY SELF-CONFERENCES OF THE DEVOUT SOUL,

UPON SUNDRY CHOICE OCCASIONS;

WITH HUMBLE ADDRESSES

TO THE

THRONE OF GRACE.

BY JOSEPH, BISHOP OF NORWICH.

THE

AUTHOR's SUPPLICATORY DEDICATION.

To thee, only, O my God, who hast put these holy thoughts into my soul, do I most humbly desire to dedicate both myself and them: earnestly beseeching thee graciously to accept of both; and that thou wouldest be pleased to accompany and follow these my weak practical Devotions, with a sensible blessing in every reader. Let these good Meditations not rest in the eye, but descend into the bosom of the perusers; and effectually work in their hearts, that warmth of pious affections, which I have here presumed to exemplify in mine: To the glory of thy great Name, and our mutual comfort, in the day of the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus. Amen.

SELF-CONFERENCES.

SOLILOQUY I.

THE BEST PROSPECT.

O MY God, I shall not be worthy of my eyes, if I think I can employ them better, than in looking up to thy heaven: and I shall not be worthy to look up to heaven, if I suffer my eyes to rest there, and not look through heaven at thee, the Almighty Maker and Ruler of it; who dwellest there in all glory and majesty; and if seeing thee I do not always adore thee, and find my soul taken up with awful and admiring thoughts concerning thee. I see many eyes have looked curiously upon that glorious frame, else they could not have made so punctual observation of the fire and motion of those goodly globes of light, which thou hast placed there, as to foretell all their conjunctions and oppositions, for many hundred years before: but, while they look at the motions, let me look at the mover; wondering, not without ravishment of spirit, at that infinite power and wisdom, which keeps up those numberless and immense bodies in so perfect a regularity, that they all keep their just stations and times, without the least varying from the course which thou settedst them in their first creation; so while their observation makes them the wiser, mine shall make me the holier. Much variety of objects hast thou given us, here below, which do commonly take up our eyes: but it shall be my fault, if all those do not rather lead my thoughts to thee, than withdraw them from thee; since thy power and majesty is clearly conspicuous in them all. O God, while I have eyes, let me never but see thee in all things, let me never but enjoy thee: let me see thee as thou mayest be seen, by the eye of faith, till I may see, as I am seen, hereafter, in glory: let me see thee as through a glass darkly here on earth, till I may come to see thee face to face in heaven; 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

II.

THE HAPPY PARTING.

I HAVE lived divers years longer than holy David did; yet I can truly say with him, if that psalm were his which hath the title of Moses, *We have brought our years to an end, as it were a tale that is told**; Psalm xc. 9. Methinks, O my soul, it is but yesterday since we met; and now we are upon parting: neither shall we, I hope, be unwilling to take leave; for what advantage can it be to

* Euthym. in Præfat. Psalmorum.

us to hold out longer together? One piece of me cannot but grow more infirm with use and time; and thereupon must follow a decay of all faculties and operations. Where the tools are grown bad and dull, what work can be exquisite? Thou seest it then necessary, and inevitable, that we must yield to age, and grow worse with continuance. And what privilege can mere time give us in our duration? We see the basest of stones last longer, than the durablest plants; and we see trees hold out longer, than any sensitive creatures; and divers of those sensitive creatures outlast man, the lord of them all. Neither are any of these held more excellent, because they wear out more hours. We know Enoch was more happy, that was fetched away at three hundred sixty-five years, than Methuselah at nine hundred sixty and nine; Gen. v. 23, 24, 27. Difference of age doth nothing but pull down a side, where there are not supplies of increasing abilities. Should we continue our partnership many years longer, could we hope for more health and strength of body, more vigour of understanding and judgment, more heat of good affections? And can we doubt, that it will be elsewhere better with us? Do we not know what abides for us above? Are we not assured, that *if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens?* 2 Cor. v. 1. Why, therefore, oh, why should ye be loth, to part upon fair terms? thou, O my soul, to the possession of that happy mansion, which thy Dear Saviour hath from eternity prepared for thee in his Father's house; and thou, O my body, to that quiet repository of thy grave, till ye both shall happily meet in the blessed resurrection of the just, never, never to be severed.

III.

HEAVENLY CONVERSATION.

It matters not a little, with whom we hold our familiar conversation; for, commonly, we are transformed into the dispositions and manners of those, whose company we frequent: we daily see those, who, by haunting the society of drunkards and debauched persons, have, from civil and orderly men, grown into extremity of lewdness; and, on the contrary, those, who have consorted themselves with the holy and virtuous, have attained to a gracious participation of their sanctity. Why shouldest thou not then, O my soul, by a continual conversation with God and his angels, improve to a heavenly disposition? Thou canst not, while thou art here, but have somewhat to do with the world: that will necessarily intrude into thy presence, and force upon thee businesses unavoidable; and thy secular friends may well look to have some share in thy sociable entertainments. But these are but goers and comers, easily and willingly dismissed, after some kind interlocutions: the company; that must stick by thee, is spiritual; which shall never leave thee, if thou have the grace to apply thyself to them upon all occasions. Thou mayest hold fair correspondence with all other, not offensive companions; but thy entireness must

be only with these. Let those other be never so faithful, yet they are uncertain; be their will never so good, yet their power is limited: these are never but at hand; never but able and willing to make and keep thee happy. O my God, thou seest how subject I am to distractions: oh, hold me close to thee: let me enter into the same company here in my pilgrimage, which I shall for ever enjoy hereafter in my home.

IV.

LOVE-UNCHANGEABLE.

Our younger years are wont to be delighted with variety; and to be much affected to a change, although to the worse: the child is better pleased with his new coat, though the old be far handsomer: whereas age and experience fixeth our desires; and teacheth us to set the greatest value upon those good things, wherewith we have been longest acquainted. Yea, it is the general disposition of nature, to be cloyed with continued blessings; and, upon long fruition, to complain of that good, which we first commended for pleasing and beneficial. What could relish better with the Israelites, the first morning, than the angels' food, which fell down from heaven every day about their camp? the taste whereof was like to wafers made with honey; Exod. xvi. 13. Deut. viii. 3. Exod. xvi. 31. If we stay but a while, we shall, ere many years, hear them calling for the onions and garlick of Egypt; and crying out, *Now our soul is dried away; there is nothing but this Manna before our eyes;* Num. xi. 6. Our wanton appetite is apt to be weary of the best blessings, both of earth and heaven, and to nauseate with store: neither is any thing more tedious to us, than the enjoined repetition of a daily-tasked devotion. But, contrarily, grace endears all blessings to us, by their continuance; and heightens our affections, where they are rightly placed, by the length of the time of their enjoying. O God, it is thy mercy, that thou hast vouchsafed to allow me an early interest in thee, even from my tender years: the more and longer I have known thee, the more cause have I still found to love thee, and adore thee. Thou art ever one and unchangeable: oh, make thou my heart so. Devote thou me wholly unto thee; and, by how much cooler my old age is in all other affections, inflame it so much the more in my love to thee.

V.

THE HAPPIEST OBJECT.

If we could attain to settle in our thoughts a right apprehension of the Majesty of God, it would put us into the comfortable exercise of all the affections that belong to the soul. For, surely, if we could conceive aright of his omnipotent power, and transcending glory, and incomprehensible infiniteness; we could not but tremble before him, and be always taken up with an adoring fear of him: and, if we could apprehend his infinite goodness both in himself and to mankind; we could not but be ravished with a fervent love to him, and should think ourselves happy that we might

be allowed to love such a God: and, if we could conceive of that absolute beauty of his holiness and blissful presence; we could not but be enflamed with a longing desire to enjoy such a God: and, if we could apprehend all these; we could not be but both transported with an unspeakable joy, that we have a sure interest in a God so holy, so good, so almighty, so glorious; and stricken with an unexpressible grief, that we should either offend him, or suffer ourselves to want but for a moment the feeling presence of that all-sufficient and all-comprehending Majesty. On the contrary, those men begin at the wrong end, who go about to draw their affections to God, first; and then, after, seek to have their minds enlightened with right conceits of his essence and attributes: who, meeting with those occurrent temptations, which mainly cross them in their desires and affections, are straight set off from prosecuting their good motions; and are as new to seek of a God, as if they had never bent their thoughts towards heaven. O God, let it be the main care of my life, to know thee; and, whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ, thy Son, my Saviour. I cannot, through thy mercy, fail of a heavenly disposition of soul, while I am here; and of a life of eternal glory, with thee, hereafter.

VI.

UNCHANGEABLE DURATION.

In the first minute wherein we live, we enter upon an eternity of being: and, though at the first, through the want of the exercise of reason, we cannot know it; and, afterwards, through our inconsideration and the bewitching businesses of time, we do not seriously lay it to heart; we are in a state of everlastingness. There must, upon the necessity of our mortality, be a change of our condition; but, with a perpetuity of our being: the body must undergo a temporary dissolution, and the soul a remove either to bliss or torment; but both of them, upon their meeting, shall continue in an unchangeable duration for ever and ever. And, if we are wont to slight transitory and vanishing commodities, by reason of their momentary continuance, and to make most account of things durable, what care and great thoughts ought I to bestow upon myself, who shall outlast the present world! and how ought I to frame my life so, as it may fall upon an eternity infinitely happy and glorious! O God, do thou set off my heart from all these earthly vanities, and fix it above with thee. As there shall be no end of my being, so let there be no change of my affections. Let them, beforehand, take possession of that heaven of thine, whereto I am aspiring. Let nothing but this clay of mine be left remaining upon this earth, whereinto it is mouldering. Let my spiritual part be ever with thee, whence it came; and enter upon that bliss, which knows neither change nor end.

VII.

TRUST UPON TRIAL.

What a Providence there is, over all the creatures in the world; which both produceth them to their being, and overrules and

carries them on, to and in their dissolution, without their knowledge or intended co-operation: but, for those, whom God hath endued with the faculty of ratiocination, how easy is it to observe the course of the divine proceedings with them! how that all-wise God contrives their affairs and events, quite beyond and above the power of their weak projections; how he prevents their desires; how he fetches about unexpected and improbable occurrences, to their hinderance or advantage: sometimes, blessing them with success, beyond all their hopes; sometimes, blasting their projects, when their blossoms are at the fairest. Surely, if I look only in a dull stupidity upon the outsides of all accidents that befall me, and not improve my reason and faith to discern and acknowledge that invisible power that orders them to his own and their ends, I shall be little better than brutish; and if, upon the observation of that good hand of God, sensibly leading me on in all the ways of my younger and riper age, in so many feeling and apparent experiments of his gracious provisions and protections, I shall not have learned to trust him with the small remainder of my days, and the happy close of that life which he hath so long and mercifully preserved, the favours of a bountiful God shall have been cast away upon a barren and unthankful heart. O God, I am such as thou hast made me: make up thy good work in me; and keep me, that I do not mar myself with my wretched unbelief. I have tried thee to the full. Oh, that I could cast myself wholly upon thee; and trust thee, both with my body and soul, for my safe passage to that blessed home, and for the perfect accomplishment of my glory in thine!

VIII.

ANGELICAL FAMILIARITY.

THERE is no reason to induce a man to think, that the good angels are not as assiduously present with us for our good, as the evil angels are for our hurt; since we know, that the evil spirits cannot be more full of malice to work our harm, than the blessed angels are full of charity and well-wishing to mankind; and the evil are only let loose to tempt us by a permission of the Almighty, whereas the good are by a gracious delegation from God encharged with our custody; Heb. i. 14. Now, that the evil spirits are ever at hand, ready upon all occasions to present their service to us for our furtherance to mischief, appears too plainly in their continual temptations which they inject into our thoughts; in their real and speedy operations with the spells and charms of their wicked clients, which are no less effectually answered by them, immediately upon their practice, than natural causes are by their ordinary and regular productions. It must needs follow, therefore, that the good angels are as close to us, and as inseparable from us: and, though we see neither; yet, he, that hath spiritual eyes, perceives them both, and is accordingly affected to their presence. If then wicked men stick not, to go so far, as to endanger and draw on their own damnation, by familiarly conversing with malignant

spirits; why should not I, for the unspeakable advantage of my soul, affect an awful familiar conversation with those blessed angels, which I know to be with me? The language of spirits are thoughts: why do not I entertain them in my secret cogitations, and hold a holy discourse with them in mental allocutions: and so carry myself, as that I may ever hold fair correspondence with those invisible companions; and may expect from them all gracious offices, of holy motions, careful protection, and, at last, a happy conveyance to my glory? O my soul, thou art a spirit, as they are: do thou ever see them, as they see thee; and so speak to them, as they speak to thee; and bless thy God for their presence and tuition; and take heed of doing ought, that may cause those heavenly guardians to turn away their faces from thee, as ashamed of their charge.

IX.

THE UNANSWERABLE CHRISTIAN.

It is no small grief to any good heart, that loves the Lord Jesus in sincerity, to see how utterly unanswerable the greater sort of men, that bear the name of Christ, are to the example and precepts of that Christ, whose name they bear. He was humble and meek; they, proud and insolent: he bade us love our enemies; they hardly can love their friends: he prayed for his persecutors; they curse: he, that had the command of all, cared not to possess any thing; they, not having right to much, would possess all: he bade us give our coat also to him, that takes our cloak; they take both coat and cloak from him, that hath it; he bade us turn our cheek for the other blow; they will be sure to give two blows for one: he paid obedience to a foster-father, and tribute to Cæsar; they despise government: his trade was only doing good, spending the night in praying, the day in preaching and healing; they debauch their time, revelling away the night, and sleeping away or misspending the day: he forbade oaths; they not only swear and forswear, but blaspheme too: he bade us make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; they make mammon their God: he bade us take up his cross; they impose their own: he bade us lay up our treasure in heaven; they place their heaven in earth: he bids us give to them that ask; they take violently from the owners: he bade us return good, for evil; they, for good, return evil: he charged his disciples to love one another; they nourish malice and rancour against their brethren: he left peace, for a legacy to his followers; they are apt to set the world on fire: his business was to save; theirs, to destroy. O God, let rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they do no better keep the law of thy Gospel; Psalm cxix. 136. Give grace to all, that are called by thy Name, to walk worthy of that high profession, whereto they are called: and keep me, thy unworthy servant, that I may never deviate from that blessed pattern, which thou hast set before me. Oh, let me never shame that great Name, that is put upon me. Let me, in all things, approve myself a Christian in earnest; and so conform

myself to thee, in all thy examples and commands, that it may be no dishonour to thee to own me for thine.

X.

HELLISH HOSTILITY.

I CANNOT but observe, how universal it is, in all kinds, for one creature to prey upon another: the greater fishes devour the less: the birds of rapine feed upon the smaller fowls: the ravenous wild beasts sustain themselves with the flesh of the weaker and tamer cattle: the dog pursues the hare; the cat, the mouse: yea, the very mole, under the earth, hunts for the worm; and the spider, in our window, for the fly. Whether it pleased God to ordain this antipathy in nature, or whether man's sin brought this enmity upon the creature, I enquire not: this I am sure of, that both God hath given unto man, the lord of this inferior world, leave and power, to prey upon all these his fellow-creatures, and to make his use of them both for his necessity and lawful pleasure; and that the God of this World is only he, that hath stirred up men to prey upon one another: some, to eat their flesh, as the savage Indians; others, to destroy their lives, estates, good names: this proceeds only from him, that is a murderer from the beginning. O my soul, do thou mourn in secret, to see the great enemy of mankind so woefully prevalent, as to make the earth so bloody a shambles to the sons of men; and to see Christians so outrageously cruel to their own flesh. And O thou, that art the Lord of Hosts and the God of Peace, restrain thou the violent fury of those, which are called by thy name; and compose these unhappy quarrels, amongst them, that should be brethren. Let me, if it may stand with thy blessed will, once again see peace smile over the earth, before I come to see thy face in glory.

XI.

FALSE JOY.

AMONGST these public blusters of the world, I find many men, that secretly applaud themselves in the conceit of a happy peace, which they find in their bosom: where all is calm and quiet; no distemper of passions, no fear of evil, no sting of remorse, no disturbance of doubts; but all smoothness of brow, and all tranquillity of mind; whose course of life, yet, without any great enquiry, hath appeared to be not over-strict and regular. I hear them boast of their condition, without any envy of their happiness; as one, that would rather hear them complain of their inward unquietness, than brag of their peace. Give me a man, that, after many secret bickerings and hard conflicts in his breast, upon a serious penitence and sense of reconciliation with his God, hath attained to a quiet heart, walking conscionably and close with that Majesty with whom he is atoned; I shall bless and emulate him, as a meet subject of true joy. For, spiritually, there is never a perfect calm, but after a tempest: the wind, and earthquake, and

fire make way for the soft voice; 1 Kings xix. But I pity the flatteries and self-applauses of a careless and impenitent heart: this jollity hath in it much danger; and, without some change, death. O Saviour, I know thou camest to send fire on the earth; yea, fire unto these earthen bosoms, whereof the very best hath combustible matter enough for thee to work upon; *and what will I*, thou sayest, *if it be already kindled?* Luke xii. 49. O Blessed Jesu, my will agrees with thine: I desire nothing in the world more, than that this fire of thine may flame up in my soul; and burn up those secret corruptions, which have lain smothering within me. Set me at full variance with myself, that I may be at peace with thee.

XII.

TRUE LIGHT.

THOU hast taught us, O Saviour, that even the light of man may be darkness, and that the light endarkened causeth the greatest darkness; Matt. vi. 23: neither can it be otherwise: since the very obscuring of the light maketh some kind of darkness, the utter extinction of it must needs make the darkness absolute. Now, what is darkness, but a mere privation of light? There is but a double spiritual light, the absence whereof causeth darkness. Thine Evangelist hath justly said of thee, Thou art *the true light, that enlightenest every man, that cometh into the world;* John i. 9. Thy Psalmist hath said of thy Divine Oracles, *Thy word is a lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my steps;* Psalm cxix. 105: whosoever wants both, or either of these, cannot but be in darkness; yea, his pretended light cannot but be darkness itself. I see, O Lord, there is much of this dark light in the world. In one, I observe a kind of glowworm-light, which, in a summer's evening, shines somewhat bright; but he, that should offer to light his candle at it, would be much deceived: this is justly a dark light, since it shines not at all by day, neither is at all communicable to another, no not to the bearer itself. In another, I see the light of a dark-lantern, which casts out some gleams of light; but only to him, that bears it: even this man's light is darkness also, to all the world besides himself. In a third, I see a resemblance of that meteorical light, which appears in moorish places, that seems fire, but is nothing but a slimy glittering exhalation; causing both the wonder and error of the traveller; leading him, through the impulsive motion of the air, into a ditch: and of this kind I find too much variety; all of them agreeing in this, that they pretend visions and revelations of the Spirit, even for contrary projections. O Saviour, what light soever is not derived from thee is no better than darkness. Thou hast sufficiently revealed thyself and thy will to us, in thy word: as for any new lights, except it be a clearer manifestation of the old, O Lord, give me the grace not to follow them. I find a double light to proceed from thee; one, which is a general light, that enlightens every man that comes into the world; the other, especial light of thy Spirit, illuminating the soul

of every believer, with a right apprehension of thee and heavenly things. Oh, do thou shine into my soul, with this heavenly light of thine; and, if this be not enough to make me happy, without the accession and with the rejection of other new lights, let me sit in perpetual darkness.

XIII.

BOSOM-DISCOURSE.

O Lord, if I had the skill and grace to be ever communing with my own heart and with thee, I should never want either work or company; never have cause to complain, of solitariness or tedious hours: for there is no time, wherein there is not some main business to be done, between thee and my soul: one while, finding my heart dull and stupid, I should have cause to rouse it up by some quickening meditation; another while, finding it dejected with some unexpected cross, I should be cheering it up with some comfortable applications: one while, finding it distracted with some scrupulous doubts, I should be labouring to settle it in just resolutions; another while, perceiving it to incline towards idle thoughts, I should be checking it with a seasonable reprehension: one while, finding it faint and slack in holy duties, I should chide it into a more sensitive vigour; another while, finding it more cheerful in the performances of devotion, I should encourage it with the assurance of a gracious acceptation: one while, I should find cause to fortify it against temptations; another while, to erect it after a foil: one while, to conflict; another, to triumph: one while, to examine my condition; another while, either to deplore, or congratulate it: one while, I should find time to sue to thee, my God, for the supply of some want; another while, to bless thee, for favours received: one while, to bemoan my wretchedness; another while, to adore thy infinite greatness: one while, to renew my vows; another while, to beg pardon for my omissions: one while, to seek thee with tears and due humiliation; another while, to rejoice in thy great salvation. The varieties of my ever-changing condition, while I am in this vale of misery, cannot want the perpetual employment of a busy soul. O God, let me be dumb to all the world, so as I may ever have a tongue for thee and my own heart.

XIV.

THE INSENSIBLE FETTERS.

What a subtle devil we have to deal with! He will be sure to give the sinner line enough; so he may be sure to hold him: he shall have his full scope and freedom, to all honest and religious practices; so as, by some one secret sin, that evil spirit may have power over his soul, both to ensnare and retain it. He cares not how godly we seem, how conscionable we are in all other actions; so as he may still, in one dear sin, keep us fast entangled. Whereupon it often comes to pass, that, not only the eyes of the world, but even our own, are too often deceived, in the judgment of our spiritual estate. We profess strict holiness; and give good proofs,

upon occasion, of a tender and well-guided conscience; so as, this glorious shew wins us the reputation of rare virtue and exemplary piety: yet still, that wicked devil hath a tie upon our heel: there is some peccadillo of smothered lust, or concealed pride, or zealous cruelty and uncharitableness, that gives him the command of our souls at pleasure: and this shall no less fetch us within his power and mercy, than if we were locked up under a thousand chains. O God, thou, who art infinite both in wisdom and power, do thou enable me, not only to resist the power, but to avoid the wiles of that cunning spirit. Let me give him no advantage, by the close entertainment of any bosom sin. Let my holiness and obedience be as universal, as either thy commands, or his mischievous intentions.

XV.

SATAN'S PREVALENCE.

How busy and prevalent Satan is, in this present age, above all former times, appears too plainly, in those universal broils and combustions, which he hath raised, all the world over; whereof no nation, of the whole known habitable earth, is at this day free: in the strange number and variety of sects, schisms, heresies, set on foot by him, every where; the like whereof were never heard of, in the preceding times of the Church: in the rifeness of bold and professed atheism: and, most clearly, in the marvellous multitude of witches abounding in all parts. Heretofore, one of those clients of hell, in a whole country, was hooted at as a strange monster; now, hundreds are discovered, in one shire; and, if fame deceive us not, in a village of fourteen houses, in the north-parts, are found so many of this damned breed: heretofore, only some barbarous and wild deserts, or some rude uninhabited coasts, as of Lapland and Finland, &c. were thought to be haunted with such miscreant guests; now the civilest and most religious parts are frequently pestered with them: heretofore, some silly, poor, and ignorant old women were thus deluded by that infernal impostor; now, we have known those of both sexes, which have professed much knowledge, holiness, devotion, drawn into this damnable practice. What shall we say to all these over-pregnant proofs, of the unusually prevailing power of hell? Certainly, either Satan is now let loose, according to the prediction of the holy Evangelist in Patmos, towards the end of the world: or, because he finds his time but short, he rageth thus extremely; as if, what he must lack in time, he would make up in fury. But, O Blessed God, thine infinite wisdom, and omnipotence, knows how to make a just advantage of that increased power and success, which thou hast permitted to this great enemy of mankind. Thy justice is hereby magnified, in thy just judgments upon the wicked; and thy mercy, in the gain, that hence accrues to thy chosen: for, certainly, thy true Saints would not be so eminently holy, if Satan were not so malicious. Thou, who, in natural causes, are wont to work by

contraries, so as inward heat is ordinarily augmented by the extremity of an ambient cold, canst and wilt do so much more in spiritual. What thy visible Church loseth, in the number of formal professors, is abundantly made up, in the vigorous graces of thy real Saints. Still and ever, do thou so order and overrule these busy workings of the powers of darkness, that thou mayest repay thine unreclaimable enemies with judgments; and heighten the piety, vigilancy, and zeal of thy faithful ones.

XVI.

LEISURELY GROWTH.

We are all commonly impatient of leisure; and apt to over-hasten the fruition of those good things we affect. One would have wealth; but he would not be too long in getting of it; he would have golden showers rain down into his lap, on the sudden: another would be wise and learned; yet he cannot abide to stay for grey hairs, or to spend too much oil in his tedious lucubrations. One would be free; but he would not wear out an apprenticeship: another would be honourable; but he would neither serve long, nor hazard much. One would be holy; but he would not wait too long at the door-posts of God's house, nor lose too many hours in the exercise of his stinted devotions: another would be happy; but he would leap into heaven suddenly, not abiding to think of a leisurely towering up thither by a thousand degrees of ascent, in the slow proficiency of grace. Whereas the great God of Heaven, that can do all things in an instant, hath thought good to produce all the effects of natural agency not without a due succession of time. When I look into my garden, there I see first a small spire look out of the earth, which, in some months' time, grows into a stalk; then, after many days expectation, branches forth into some leaves: at last, appears the hope of a flower, which, ripened with many suns and showers, arises to its perfection; and, at last, puts forth its seed for a succeeding multiplication. If I look into my orchard, I see the well-grafted scions yield, first, a tender bud: itself, after many years, is bodied to a solid stock; and, under the patience of many hard winters, spreads forth large arms: at last, being grown to a meet age of vegetation, it begins to grace the spring with some fair blossoms, which, falling off kindly, give way to a weak embryon of fruit: every day now adds something to the growth, till it attain, in autumn, to a full maturity. Why should I make account of any other course, in my spiritual proceedings? O God, I shall be always ready to censure my slow pace, in grace and holy obedience; and shall be ever ambitious of aspiring higher, in thy gracious favour: but, when I shall have endeavoured my utmost, I shall wait with humble patience upon thy bountiful hand; as one, that desires thankfully to acknowledge the little that I have received, and meekly to attend thy good pleasure for what I may receive. So thou bring me to heaven, take what time and keep what pace thou pleasest.

XVII.

ALLOWABLE VARIETY.

It is a great and insolent wrong in those men, who shall think to reduce all dispositions, and forms of devotion, and usages, to their own: since, in all these, there may be much variety; and all those different fashions may receive a gracious acceptation in heaven. One thinks it best, to hold himself to a set form of invocation; another deems it far better, to be left free to his arbitrary and unpremeditated expressions: one pleases himself with this notion of that Omnipotent Deity whom he implores; another thinks that may be more proper and affective: one thinks this posture of body may be the meetest for his humble address to the Throne of Grace, or to the Table of the Heavenly Manna; another likes that better: one is for a long prayer; another, for short ejaculations: one desires to raise up his spirits, with the Prophet, by the aid of a harmonious melody; another holds them better fixed in a sad silence: one holds it best to set forth God's service in a solemn state and magnificence; another approves better of a simple and inceremonious devotion: one requires a sacred place and a peculiar habit, as best becoming God's public worship; another makes no difference of either room or dress: one makes scruple of coming otherwise than fasting to the Lord's Table; another conceives it more seasonable after a Love-Feast: one thinks his Christian liberty allows him the moderate scope to all not-unlawful recreations; another's austerity interdicts all pastimes: one judgeth this hair and that attire, not lawful only, but comely; another thinks he espies sin in both. O God, as thou hast ever shewed thyself justly severe, in the avenging of sin; so I know thee graciously indulgent, in allowing thy servants much latitude, in the free use of all that thou hast not prohibited: in imitation whereof, give me a heart holily zealous to abhor every thing that is truly evil, and charitably affected to the favourable censure of all usages that are merely indifferent. Let my main care be, to look to the sincerity of my soul, and to the sure grounds of warrant for my actions: for other circumstantial appurtenances, where thou art pleased to be liberal, let me not be strait-handed.

XVIII.

MISCONSTRUCTIONS OF HOLINESS.

It is no marvel, if there be nothing that undergoes more variety of constructions from the lookers on, than holiness: for that, being an inward gracious disposition of the soul, conformed to God in all the renewed faculties thereof, lies so close in the bosom, that it can only be guessed at, by such uncertain emanations of words and actions, as flow from it to the ears and eyes of others. The particular graces and affections of love, fear, hope, joy, godly sorrow, zeal, and the rest, break forth apparently in such symptoms and effects, as may win a certainty of belief from the beholders; nei-

ther, indeed, are easily concealed from the view of others: all these may be read in the face: but, if the heart itself could be seen, and that curiously dissected, yet even thus could not holiness be discovered. Beside the closeness, every man is apt to measure his judgment of holiness, by a false rule of his own; whereby it comes to pass, that it is so commonly mistaken. One thinks him holy, that forsakes the world, and retires into some wild desert, or mures up himself in an anchorite's cell: another judges him holy, that macerates his body with fasting, that disciplines his hide with whips and hair cloths, that lies hard and fares hard; that abstains from all that relates to flesh, in his Lent and Embers; that passionately hugs his crucifix, and tosses his beads, and duly observes his shrifts and canonical hours: now this man, that, in their way, is in danger of canonization for a saint, is, by the professor of an opposite holiness, decried to hell, for superstition and idolatry. One styles him holy, who segregates himself from the contagious communion of formal Christians; professing to serve his God in a purer way of worship; rejecting all stinted forms of prayer and psalmody; spitting at the mention of a hierarchy; allowing no head sacred, but by the imposition of what we miscall, laic hands; abandoning all ceremonies of human institution; abiding no circumstances of divine worship, but apostolical: another allows him only holy, who is already a citizen of the new Jerusalem; advanced to such an entireness with God, as that he is no less than glorified; he hath left the Scriptures below him, as a weak and dead letter, and is far above all whatsoever ordinance; yea, which I tremble to report, above the blood of Christ himself: a third reputes him only holy, who, having left the society of all Churches as too impure, stands now alone; waiting for some miracles from heaven, to settle his resolution. Now, Lord, after all these and many more weak and idle misprisions, upon the sure and unfailing grounds of truth, (*thy Word is Truth,*) I know that man to be truly holy, whose understanding is enlightened with right apprehensions of thee and heavenly things; whose will and affections are rightly disposed to thee, so as his heart is wholly taken up with thee; whose conversation is so altogether with thee, that he thinks all time lost, wherein he doth not enjoy thee, and a sweet and heavenly communion with thee; walking perpetually with thee, and labouring in all things to be approved of thee. O God, do thou work me up to this temper, and keep me still in it: and then, however I may differ in a construction of holiness from others that think themselves more perfect, howsoever I may be censured as defective in my judgment or affections; yet I do not, without sound and sensible comfort, know, that my Judge is in heaven, and my witness in my bosom.

XIX.

TWO HEAVENS IN ONE.

I WAS wont to say, "It is in vain for a man to hope for, and impossible for him to enjoy, a double heaven; one below, and ano-

ther above: since our sufferings here on earth must make way for our future glory:" But now I find it, in a better sense, very feasible for a true Christian to attain both: for, as we say, where the Prince resides, there is the Court; so, surely, where the Supreme and Infinite Majesty pleases to manifest his presence, there is Heaven. Whereas, therefore, God exhibits himself present two ways, in grace and in glory; it must follow, that the gracious presence of God makes a heaven here below, as his glorious presence makes a heaven above. Now, it cannot but fall out, that, as the lower material heaven comes far short of the purity of the superior regions, being frequently overcast with clouds, and troubled with other both watery and fiery meteors: so, this spiritual heaven below, being many times darkened with sad desertions and blustered with temptations, cannot yield that perfection of inward peace and happiness, which remains for us above this sphere of mutability; yet affords us so much fruition of God, as may give us a true title and entrance into blessedness. I well see, O God, it is no paradox, to say, that thy Saints reign with thee here on earth: though not for a thousand years; yet during the time of their sojourning here below: not in any secular splendour and magnificence, not in bodily pleasures and sensual contentments; yet in true spiritual delectation, in the joys of the Holy Ghost, *unspeakable and full of glory.* O my God, do thou thus set my foot over the threshold of thy heaven. Put thou my soul into this happy condition of an inchoate blessedness: so shall I cheerfully spend the remainder of my days, in a joyful expectation of the full consummation of my glory.

XX.

THE STOCK EMPLOYED.

What are all excellencies, without respect of their use? How much good ground is there in the world, that is neither cultured nor owned! What a world of precious metals lie hid in the bowels of the earth, which shall never be coined! What store of rich pearls and diamonds are hoarded up in the earth and sea, which shall never see the light! What delicacies of fowls and fishes do both elements afford, which shall never come to the dish! How many great wits are there in the world, which lie willingly concealed; whether out of modesty, or idleness, or lack of a wished opportunity! Improvement gives a true value to all blessings. A penny in the purse is worth many pounds, yea talents, in an unknown mine. That is our good, which doth us good. O God, give thou me grace, to put out my little stock to the public bank; and faithfully to employ those poor faculties thou hast given me, to the advantage of thy Name, and the benefit of thy Church: so, besides the gain of others, my pounds shall be rewarded with cities.

XXI.

LOVE OF LIFE.

We are all naturally desirous to live; and, though we prize life

above all earthly things, yet we are ashamed to profess that we desire it for its own sake; but pretend some other subordinate reason to affect it. One would live to finish his building, or to clear his purchase; another, to breed up his children, and to see them well matched: one would fain outlive his trial at law; another wishes to outwear an emulous corrival: one would fain outlast a lease, that holds him off from his long-expected possessions; another would live to see the times amend, and a re-establishment of a public peace. Thus we, that would be glad to give skin for skin and all things for life, would seem to wish life for any thing but itself. After all this hypocrisy, nature, above all things, would live; and makes life the main end of living: but grace has higher thoughts; and, therefore, though it holds life sweet and desirable, yet entertains the love of it upon more excellent, that is, spiritual terms. O God, I have no reason to be weary of this life, which, through thy mercy, long acquaintance hath endeared to me; though sauced with some bitter disgusts of age: but, how unworthy shall I approve myself of so great a blessing, if now I do not more desire to continue it for thy sake, than my own!

XXII.

EQUAL DISTRIBUTION.

It was a most idle question, which the philosophers are *said to have proposed to Barnabas, the colleague of St. Paul: "Why a small gnat should have six legs, and wings beside; whereas the elephant, the greatest of beasts, hath but four legs, and no wings." What pity it is, that those wise masters were not of the counsel of the Almighty, when he was pleased to give a being to his creature! they would surely have devised to make a winged elephant, and a corpulent gnat; a feathered man, and a speaking beast. Vain fools! they had not learned to know and adore that infinite wisdom, wherein all things were made. It is not for that Incomprehensible Majesty and Power, to be accountable to wretched man, for the reasons of his all-wise and mighty creation: yet, so hath he contrived it, that there is no part of his great workmanship, whereof even man cannot be able to give an irrefragable reason, why thus framed, not otherwise. What were more easy, than to say, that six legs to that unwieldy body had been cumbersome, and impeditive of motion; that the wings for so massy a bulk had been useless? I admire thee, O God, in all the works of thy hands: and justly magnify, not only thine omnipotence, both in the matter and form of their creation; but thy mercy and wisdom, in the equal distribution of all their powers and faculties, which thou hast so ordered, that every creature hath some requisite helps, no creature hath all. The fowls of the air, which are ordained for flight, hast thou furnished with feathers, to bear them up in that light element: the fishes, with smooth scales and fins, for their more easy

* Clement. de gestis Petri.

gliding through those watery regions: the beasts of the field, with such limbs and strong hides, as might fit them for service: as for man, the lord of all the rest, him thou hast endued with reason, to make his use of all these. Whom yet thou hast so framed, as that, in many qualities, thou hast allowed the brute creatures to exceed their master: some of them are stronger than he; some of them swifter than he, and more nimble than he: he were no better than a madman, that should ask, why man should not fly as well as the bird, and swim as well as the fish, and run as fast as the hart; since that one faculty of reason, wherewith he is furnished, is more worth, than all the brutish excellencies of the world put together. O my God, thou, that hast enriched me with a reasonable soul, whom thou mightest have made the brutest of thy creatures, give me the grace so to improve thy gift, as may be most to the glory and advantage of thy own Name: let me, in the name and behalf of all my brute fellow-creatures, bless thee for them; and, both for them and myself, in a ravishment of spirit, cry out, with the Psalmist, *O Lord my God, how wonderful and excellent are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all.*

XXIII.

THE BODY OF SUBJECTION.

Bodily exercise, saith the Apostle, *profits little;* 1 Tim. iv. 8. little, sure, in respect of any worth, that it hath in itself; or any thank, that it can expect from the Almighty. For, what is it to that good and great God, whether I be full or fasting; whether I wake or sleep; whether my skin be smooth or rough, ruddy or pale, white or discoloured; whether my hand be hard with labour, or soft with ease; whether my bed be hard, or yielding; whether my diet be coarse, or delicate? But, though in itself it avail little, yet so it may be, and hath been, and ought to be improved, as that it may be found exceedingly beneficial to the soul: else, the same Apostle would not have said, *I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away;* 1 Cor. ix. 27. In all the records of history, whom do we find more noted for holiness, than those, who have been most austere in the restraints of bodily pleasures and contentments? In the Mount of Tabor, who should meet with our Saviour in his Transfiguration, but those two eminent Saints, which had fasted an equal number of days with himself? And, our experience tells us, that what is detracted from the body is added to the soul: for the flesh and spirit are not more partners, than enemies: one gains by the other's loss: the pampering of the flesh, is the starving of the soul. I find an unavoidable emulation between these two parts of myself: O God, teach me to hold an equal hand betwixt them both: let me so use them, as holding the one my favourite, the other my drudge; not so humouring the worse part, as to discontent the better; nor so wholly regarding the better, as altogether to discourage the worse. Both are thine; both by gift,

and purchase: enable thou me to give each of them their dues; so as the one may be fitted, with all humble obsequiousness to serve; the other, to rule and command, with all just authority and moderation.

XXIV.

THE GROUND OF UNPROFICIENCY.

WHERE there is defect in the principles, there can be no possibility of prevailing in any kind. Should a man be so foolish as to persuade his horse, that it is not safe for him to drink in the extremity of his heat; or to advise a child, that it is good for him to be whipt, or, in a case of mortal danger, to have a fontinel made in his flesh; how fondly should he mis-spend his breath! because the one wants the faculty, the other the use, of reason. So, if a man shall sadly tell a wild sensualist, that it is good for him, to bear the yoke in his youth; that it is meet for him, to curb and cross his unruly appetite; that the bitterest cup of afflictions ought to be freely taken off, as the most sovereign medicine of the soul; that we ought to bleed and die for the name of Christ; that all *the sufferings of the present times are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us*; Rom. viii. 18. his labour is no less lost, than if he had made an eloquent oration to a deaf man: because this carnal hearer lacks that principle of grace and regeneration, which only can enable him to apprehend and relish these divine counsels. I see, O God, I see too well, how it comes to pass, that thy word sounds so loud, and prevails so little; even because it is not joined with faith in the hearers: the right principle is missing, which should make the soul capable of thy divine mysteries. Faith is no less essential to the true Christian, than reason is to man, or sense to a beast. Oh, do thou furnish my soul with this heavenly grace of thine; and then all thy Sacred Oracles shall be as clear to my understanding, as any visible object is to my sense.

XXV.

THE SURE REFUGE.

Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof, saith our Saviour: lo, every day hath its evil, and that evil is load enough for the present, without the further charge of our anticipated cares. Surely, the life of man is conflicted with such a world of crosses succeeding each other, that, if he have not a sure refuge to flee unto, he cannot chuse but be quite over-laid with miseries: one while, his estate suffers, whether through casualty or oppression; another while, his children miscarry, whether by sickness, or death, or disorder: one while, his good name is impeached; another while, his body languishes: one while, his mind is perplexed with irksome suits; another while, his soul is wounded with the sting of some secret sin: one while, he is fretted with domestical discontents; another while, distempered with the public broils: one while, the sense of evil torments him; another while, the expectation. Miserable is the case of that man, who, when he is pursued with whole troops of

mischiefs, hath not a fort wherein to succour himself; and safe and happy is that soul, that hath a sure and impregnable hold, whereto he may resort. O the noble example of holy David! never man could be more perplexed than he was, at his Ziklag; his city burnt, his whole stock plundered, his wives carried away, his people cursing, his soldiers mutinying, pursued by Saul, cast off by the Philistines, helpless, hopeless: *But David fortified himself in the Lord his God;* 1 Sam. xxx. 6. There, there, O Lord, is a sure help, in the time of trouble: a safe protection, in the time of danger; a most certain remedy of all complaints: let my dove get once into the holes of that rock, in vain shall all the birds of prey hover over me for my destruction.

XXVI.

THE LIGHT BURDEN.

WHY do we complain of the difficulty of a Christian profession, when we hear our Saviour say, *My yoke is easy, and my burden is light?* Certainly, he, that imposed it, hath exactly poised it; and knows the weight of it to the full. It is our fault, if we make or account that heavy, which he knows to be light. If this yoke and burden be heavy, to our sullen nature; yet, to grace, they are, if they be heavy to fear, yet they are light to love. What is more sweet and easy, than to love? and love is all the burden we need to take up: for, *Love is the fulfilling of the Law;* and the Evangelical Law is all the burden of my Saviour. O Blessed Jesu, how willingly do I stoop under thy commands! It is no other than my happiness, that thou requirest: I shall be, therefore, my own enemy, if I be not thy servant. Hadst thou not bidden me to love thee, to obey thee, thine infinite goodness and perfection of divine beauty would have attracted my heart, to be spiritually enamoured of thee: now thou biddest me to do that which I should have wished to be commanded, how gladly do I yield up my soul to thee! Lay on what load thou pleasest: since, the more I bear, the more thou enablest me to bear, and the more I shall desire to bear. The world hath so clogged me this while, with his worthless and base lumber, that I have been ready to sink under the weight; and what have I got by it, but a lame shoulder, and a galled back? Oh, do thou free me from this unprofitable and painful luggage; and ease my soul, with the happy change of thy gracious impositions; so shall thy yoke, not be easy only, but pleasing; so shall thy fulfilled will be so far from a burden to me, that it shall be my greatest delight upon earth, and my surest and comfortablest evidence for heaven.

XXVII.

JOY INTERMITTED.

WHAT a lightsomeness of heart do I now feel in myself, for the present, out of a comfortable sense of thy presence, O my God, and the apprehension of my interest in thee! Why should it

not be thus always with me? Surely thine Apostle bids me rejoice continually; and, who would not wish to do so? For, there is little difference betwixt joy and happiness: neither was it guessed ill by him, that defined that man only to be happy, that is always delighted; and, certainly, there is just cause, why I should be thus always affected. Thus, O my God, thou art still and always the same: yea, the same to me, in all thy gracious relations, of a merciful Father, a loving Saviour, a sweet Comforter: yea, thou art my Head, and I am a limb of thy Mystical Body. Such I am, and shall ever be. Thou canst no more change, than not be; and, for me, my crosses and my sins are so far from separating me from thee, that they make me hold of thee the faster. But, alas, though the just grounds of my joy be steady, yet my weak disposition is subject to variableness. While I carry this flesh about me, my soul cannot but be much swayed with the temper of my body; which sometimes inclines me to a dull listlessness, and a dumpish heaviness of heart and sadness of spirit: so as, I am utterly unapt to all cheerful thoughts; and find work enough, to pull my affections out of this stiff clay of the earth, and to raise them up to heaven. Besides, this joy of the Holy Ghost is a gift of thy divine bounty, which thou dispensest when and how thou pleasest; not always alike to thy best favourites on earth: thou, that givest thy sun and rain, dost not command thy clouds always to be dropping, nor those beams to shine continually upon any face: there would be no difference, betwixt the proceedings of nature and grace, if both produced their effects in a set and constant regularity; and what difference should I find, betwixt my pilgrimage and my home, if I should here be taken up with a perpetuity of heavenly joy? Should I always thus feelingly enjoy thee, my life of faith should be changed into a life of sense. It is enough for me, O God, that above, in those regions of bliss, my joy in thee shall be full and permanent; if, in the mean while, it may please thee, that but some flashes of that celestial light of joy may frequently glance into my soul. It shall suffice, if thou give me but a taste of those heavenly pleasures, whereon I shall once liberally feast with thee to all eternity.

XXVIII.

UNIVERSAL INTEREST.

It was a noble praise that was given to that wise heathen (Cato), that he so carried himself, as if he thought himself born for all the world. Surely, the more universal a Man's beneficence is, so much is it more commendable; and comes so much nearer to the bounty of that great God, who *openeth his hand, and filleth all things living with plenteousness.* There are too many selfish men, whose spirits, as in a close retort, are cooped up, within the compass of their own concernments; whose narrow hearts think they are born for none but themselves: others, that would seem good natured men, are willing enough to enlarge themselves to their kindred; whom they

are careful to advance, with neglect of all others, however deserving: some yet, more liberal-minded, can be content to be kind and open-handed to their neighbours: and some, perhaps, reach so far, as to profess a readiness to do all good offices to their countrymen; but here their largeness finds its utmost bounds. All these dispositions are but inclosures: give me the open champain, of a general and illimited benefacture. Is he rich? he scatters his seed abroad, by whole handfuls, over the whole ridge; and doth not drop it down, between his fingers, into the several furrows: his bread is cast upon the waters also. Is he knowing and learned? he smothers not his skill in his bosom; but freely lays it out upon the common stock: not so much regarding his private contentment, as the public proficiency. Is he deeply wise? he is ready to improve all his cares and counsels, to the advancement and preservation of peace, justice, and good order amongst men. Now, although it is not in the power of any, but persons placed in the highest orb of authority, actually to oblige the world to them; yet nothing hinders, but that men of meaner rank may have the will to be thus universally beneficent, and may, in preparation of mind, be zealously affected to lay themselves forth upon the common good. O Lord, if thou hast given me but a private and short hand, yet give me a large and public heart.

XXIX.

THE SPIRITUAL BEDLAM.

He, that, with wise Solomon, affects to know not wisdom only, but madness and folly, let him, after a serious observation of the sober part of the world, obtain of himself to visit Bedlam; and to look into the several cells of distracted persons: where, it is a wonder to see, what strange varieties of humours and passions shall present themselves to him. Here, he shall see one weeping and wringing his hands, for a merely-imaginary disaster; there, another, holding his sides in a loud laughter, as if he were made all of mirth: here, one mopishly stupid, and so fixed to his posture, as if he were a breathing statue; there, another apishly active and restless: here, one ragingly fierce, and wreaking his causeless anger on his chain; there, another gloriously boasting of a mighty style of honour, whereto his rags are justly entitled. And, when he hath wondered a while at this woeful spectacle, let him know and consider, that this is but a slight image of those spiritual phrensies, wherewith the world is miserably possessed. The persons affected believe it not: surely, should I go about to persuade any of these guests of Bedlam, that indeed he is mad, and should therefore quietly submit himself to the means of cure, I should be more mad than he: only dark rooms, and cords, and hellebore, are meet receipts for these mental distempers. In the mean while, the sober and sad beholders too well see these men's wits out of the socket; and are ready, out of Christian charity, to force upon them due remedies, who cannot be sensible of their own miseries.

Now having learned of the Great Doctor of the Gentiles, to distinguish man into *spirit, soul, and body:* 1 Thess. v. 23: whereof the body is as the earthly part, the soul as the ethereal, the spirit as the heavenly; the soul animal, the spirit rational, the body merely organical: it is easy for him to observe, that, as each of these parts exceeds other in dignity, so the distemperature thereof is so much greater and more dangerous, as the part is more excellent. When, therefore, he shall hear the Prophet Hosea say, *The spiritual man is mad,* Hosea ix. 7. he cannot think that charge less, than of the worst of phrensies.

And such, indeed, they are, which have been epidemical to all times. Could they pass for any other than sottishly mad, that would worship cats, and dogs, and serpents? so did the old Egyptians, who thought themselves the most deeply learned of all nations. Could they be less mad than they, that, of the same tree, would make a block for their fire, and a god for their adoration? so did Isaiah's idolaters; Isaiah xliv. 16. Could they be any better, who, when they had molten their ear-rings, and, with their own hands, had shaped a golden calf, could fall down and worship it; and say, *These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt?* so did they, which should have known themselves God's peculiar people; Exod. xxxii. 4. Could they be any other than madmen, that thought there was one god of the hills, another of the vallies? so did the Syrian courtiers; 1 Kings xx. 23. Could they be any other than stark mad, that would lance and gash their own flesh, because their Block did not answer them by fire? so did the Baalites; 1 Kings xviii. 28. Lastly, could they be other than the maddest of men, who would pass their own children through the fire, and burn them to ashes in a pretence of devotion? so did the clients of Moloch; 2 Kings xxiii. 10.

Yea, what speak I of the times of ignorance? even since the true light came into the world, and since the beams of his glorious Gospel shined on all faces, there hath been no less need of dark rooms and manacles than before. Can we think them other than notoriously mad, that, having good clothes to their backs, would needs strip them off, and go stark naked? So did the Adamites of old, about the year of our Lord 194: so did certain Anabaptists of Holland, at Amsterdam, in the year 1535: so did the cynical Saint Francis, in the streets of Assisium. Could they be other than mad, which would worship Cain, Judas, the Sodomites? so did those good devotionists, which were called Caiani, about the year 159. Nay, were they not worse than mad, who, if we may believe Hosius, and Lindanus, and Prateolus, worshipped the Devil, ten times every day? so did those heretics, which were in the last age called Demoniaci. Could they be better than mad, which held that beasts have reason, as well as man; that the elements have life; that plants have sense, and suffer pain in their cutting up? so did the Manichees. Could they be other than blasphemously mad, that held there are two gods, one good, the other evil; and that all creatures were made by the latter? so did the Gnostics. Were

there ever madmen in the world, if they were not such, who would beseech, yea force passengers, to do them the favour to cut their throats, in a vain affectation of the praise of martyrdom? so did the Circumcellions, a faction of Donatists in the year 349. But, above all other, did not those surpass in madness, who allowed of all heresies, and professed to hold all opinions true? so did Rhetorius, and his followers: St. Augustin's charity sticks at the belief of so impossible a tenet: I must crave leave to wonder at his reason: "For," saith he, "many opinions being contradictory to each other, no man that is *compos mentis* can think both parts can be verifiable;" as if it could be supposed, that a Rhetorius, thus opening, could be any other than beside all his wits: surely, had he been himself, so impossible an absurdity could not have fallen from him; neither could any of these fore-cited practices or opinions have been incident into any, but brains highly distempered. But what do we, raking in the ashes of these old forgotten lunatics? Would to God, we had not work, more than enough, to look for the prodigious phrensies of the present age; than which, there were never, since the world began, either more or worse!

Can there be, under the cope of heaven, a madder man, than he, that can deny there is a God? such a monster was rare, and hooted at, in the times of Paganism. The heathen orator * tells us of but two, in those dark ages before him, that were so far forsaken of their wits; and we know that the old Athenians, when a bold pen durst but question a Deity, sentenced the book to the fire, and the author to exile. But now, alas, I am ashamed to say, that this modern age, under so clear beams of the Gospel, hath bred many professed atheists; who have dared, not in their heart only, as in David's time, but with their blasphemous lips, to deny the God that made them.

And are the phrensies of those insolent souls any whit less wild and outrageous, that dare boast themselves to be God; and stick not to style themselves absolutely deified? avowing, that the soul in their body is the only Christ, or God in the flesh; that all the acts of their beastly and abominable lusts are the works of righteousness; that it is their perfection, and the highest pitch of their glory, to give themselves up to all manner of abominations, without any reluctation; that there is no hell, but a dislike of, and remorse for, their greatest villanies †: now shew me, amongst the savagest of Pagans, any one that hath been thus desperately brainsick; and let me be branded for a slanderer.

What should I need to instance in any more, or to contract a large volume of Heresiology? In short, there is no true heretic in the world, that is not, in some degree, a madman. And this spiritual madness is so much worse than the natural, as in other regards, so especially in this; that, whereas that distemper of the brain

* Cicero de Natura Deorum. initio. † "Heart-Bleedings for Professors' Abominations: set forth under the Hands of 16 churches of Christ's Baptized into the Name of Christ." pp. 5, 6, 7, &c.

contains itself in its own bounds, without any danger of diffusion to others; the spiritual, as extremely contagious, spreads its infection, to the peril of all that come within the air of it.

In this sad case, what is to be done? Surely, we may, as we do, mourn for the miserable distractions of the world; but it is thou only, O Lord, that canst heal them. O thou, that art the great and sovereign Physician of Souls; that, after seven years' brutality, restoredst the frantic Babylonian to his shape and senses; look down mercifully upon our Bedlam, and restore the distracted world to their right temper once again: as for those, that are yet sound, keep them, O God, in their right wits unto the end; preserve them safe, from all the pestilent taintures of schism and heresy: and, for me, the more insight thou givest me into, and the more sense of, these woeful distempers; so much the more thankful do thou make me to thine infinite goodness, that thou hast been graciously pleased to keep me within compass. And oh, do thou still and ever keep me, within the compass of thy revealed will, and all just moderation; and suffer me not to be miscarried into any of those exorbitances of judgment, which may prove a trouble to thy Church, and a scandal to thy Name.

XXX.

THE DIFFERENCE OF ACTIONS.

THERE is great difference in sins and actions, whether truly or seemingly offensive: there are *gnats*, and there are *camels*. Neither is there less difference in consciences: there are consciences so wide and vast, that they can swallow a camel; and there are consciences so strait, as that they strain at a gnat: yea, which is strange to observe, those very consciences, which, one while, are so dilated, that they strain not at a camel; another while, are so drawn together by an anxious scrupulousness, that they are ready to be choked with a gnat. How palpably was this seen, in the Chief Priest, and Pharisees, and Elders of the Jews! the small gnat, of entering into the Judgment-Hall of the Roman Governor, would by no means down with them; that heinous act would defile them, so as they should not eat the passover; John xviii. 28: but, in the mean time, the huge camel of the murder of the Lord passed down glib and easily through their throats. They are ready to choke, with one poor ear of corn pulled on a sabbath by a hungry passenger; yet whole houses of widows, the while, pass down their gorges, with ease. An unwashed hand or cup was piacular; while, within, their hearts are full of extortion and excess; Matt. xxiii. 25. I wish the present age did not abound with instances. It is the fashion of hypocrites, to be seemingly scrupulous in small things, while they make no conscience at all of the greatest: and to be so much less conscionable of *greater matters of the Law, judgment, mercy, and faith*; as they are more scrupulously punctual in their *mint, anise, and cummin*. O God, I would not make more sins, than thou hast made. I desire to have a heart wisely tender, not

fondly scrupulous. Let my soul endure no fetters, but thine. If indifferent things may be my gnats, let no known sin be other than a camel to me; and let me rather choke in the passage, than let down such a morsel.

XXXI.

THE NECESSITY OF LABOUR.

THE great and wise God, that hath been pleased to give to all creatures their life and being, without their endeavour or knowledge, hath yet ordained not to continue their being, without their own labour and co-operation: so as he hath imposed upon them all a necessity of pains-taking, for their own preservation. The wild beasts of the desert must walk abroad, and forage far for their prey: the beasts of the field must earn their pasture, with their work and labour, in very feeding to fill a large maw, with picking up those several mouthfuls, whereby they are sustained: the fowls of several kinds must fly abroad, to seek their various diet; some, in the hedges; some, in the fields; some, in the waters: the bee must, with unwearied industry, gather her stock of wax and honey, out of a thousand flowers. Neither know I any, that can be idle, and live. But man, as he is appointed to be the lord of all the rest; so he is, in a special manner, born to labour: as he, upon whom the charge lies, to provide both for himself and all the creatures under his command: being not more impotent than they, in his first entrance into the world; than he is, afterwards, by the power of his reason, more able to govern them, and to order all things that may concern both their use and conservation. How willingly, O Lord, should I stoop to this just condition of my creation! Labour is my destiny; and labour shall be my trade. Something, I must always do, both out of thy command, and my own inclination; as one, whose not unactive spirit abhors nothing more, than the torment of doing nothing. O God, do thou direct me to, and employ me in, those services, that may be most for thy glory, for the good of others, and my own discharge and comfort.

XXXII.

ACQUAINTANCE WITH HEAVEN.

WHAT a high favour is it, in the Great God of Heaven, that he is pleased to stoop so low, as to allow wretched man, here upon earth, to be acquainted with so Infinite a Majesty! yet, in the multitudes of his mercies, this hath he condescended unto. So far hath he yielded to us, as that he is pleased we should know him; and, to that end, he hath clearly revealed himself to mankind: and, more than so, he is willing and content that we should enjoy him, and should continually make a comfortable use of his presence with us; that we should walk with him, and impart all our secret thoughts and counsels to him; that we should call for his gracious aid upon all our occasions; that we should impart all our wants, and fears, and doubts to him, with expectation of a merciful and sure answer,

and supply from heaven: yea, that he should invite us, silly wretches, to his presence; and call us up to the throne of grace; and encourage us poor souls, dejected with the conscience of our unworthiness, to put up our suits boldly to his merciful hands: yea, that he should give this honour to dust and ashes, as to style us his friends. How shamefully unthankful, and how justly miserable shall I be, if I make not an answerable use of so infinite a mercy! O God, how utterly unworthy shall I be of this grace, if, notwithstanding these merciful proffers and solicitations, I shall continue a willing stranger from thee; and shall make no more improvement of these favours, than if they had never been rendered! Oh, let me know thee; let me acknowledge thee; let me adore thee; let me love thee; let me walk with thee; let me enjoy thee; let me, in a holy and awful familiarity, be better and more entirely acquainted with thee, than with the world, than with myself: so I shall be sure to be happy, here; and, hereafter, glorious.

XXXIII.

THE ALL-SUFFICENT KNOWLEDGE.

I FIND much enquiry of curious wits, whether we shall know one another in heaven. There is no want of arguments, on both parts; and the greatest probabilities have seemed to be for the affirmative. But, O Lord, whether or no we shall know one another, I am sure we shall all, thy glorified Saints, know thee; and, in knowing thee, we shall be infinitely happy: and what would be more? Surely, as we find here, that the sun puts out the fire, and the greater light ever extinguisheth the less; so, why may we not think it to be above? When thou art all in all to us, what can the knowledge of any creature add to our blessedness? And if, when we casually meet with a brother or a son before some great prince, we forbear the ceremonies of our mutual respects, as being wholly taken up with the awful regard of a greater presence; how much more may we justly think, that when we meet before the glorious Throne of the God of Heaven, all the respects of our former earthly relations must utterly cease, and be swallowed up of that beatifical presence, divine love, and infinitely blessed fruition of the Almighty! O God, it is my great comfort here below, to think and know, that I have parents, or children, or brothers and sisters, or friends, already in possession of glory with thee; and to believe assuredly, that, in my time, I shall be received to the association of their blessedness: but if, upon the dissolution of this earthly tabernacle, I may be admitted to the sight of thy All-glorious Essence, and may set eye upon the face of my Blessed Saviour, now sitting at the right-hand of thy Incomprehensible Majesty, attended with those millions of his heavenly angels, I shall neither have need, nor use of enquiring, after my kindred according to the flesh. What can fall into my thoughts or desires, beside or beyond that, which is infinite?

XXXIV.

POOR GREATNESS.

I CANNOT but look, with much pity, mixed with smiles, upon the vain worldling; that sets up his rest in these outward things; and so pleases himself in this condition, as if he thought no man happy but himself. How high he looks! How big he speaks! How proudly he struts! With what scorn and insultation, doth he look upon my dejectedness! The very language of his eye is no other than contempt, seeming to say, "Base Indigent, thou art stript of all thy wealth and honour: thou hast neither flocks, nor herds, nor lands, nor manors, nor bags, nor barnfuls, nor titles, nor dignities; all which I have in abundance: no man regards thy meanness; I am observed with an awful veneration." Be it so, Great Sir, think I: enjoy you your height of honour, and heaps of treasure, and ceremonies of state, while I go shrugging in a threadbare coat, and am glad to feed on single dishes, and to sleep under a thatched roof; but, let me tell you, set your all against my nothing, if you have set your heart upon these gay things: were you the heir of all the earth, I would be loth to change condition with your eminence; and will take leave to tell you, that, at your best, you shall fall within my commiseration. It is not in the power of all your earthly privileges, to render you other than a miserable vassal. If you have store of gold, alas, it is but made up into fetters and manacles; and, what is all your outward bravery, but mere matter of opinion? I shall shew you an Indian slave, that shall no less pride himself in a bracelet of glass beads, than you can in your richest jewels of rubies and diamonds. All earthly things are, as they are valued. The wise and almighty Maker of these earthen mines, esteems the best metals but as thick clay: and why should we set any other price on them, than their Creator? And, if we be wont to measure the worth of all things by their virtues, and uses, and operations; what is it, that your wealth can do? Can it free you from cares? can it lengthen your steps? can it keep you from head-aches, from gouts, dropsies, fevers, and other bodily distempers? can it ransom you from death? can it make your account easier in the great day of reckoning? Are you ever the wiser, ever the holier, ever the quieter, for that, which you have purchased with tears and blood? And, were it so precious as you imagine, what hold have you of it? what assurance to enjoy it or yourself, but one hour? As for despised me, I have wealth, that you know not of: my riches are invisible, invaluable, interminable: God all-sufficient is mine; and, with him, all things: my treasure is not locked up in earth, or in heaven; but fills both: my substance is sure; not obnoxious to plunder, or loss, or diminution: no man hath bled, no widow or orphan hath wept, for my enriching: the only difference is this; you are miserable, and think yourself happy; I am happy, whom you think miserable: however our thoughts may bear us out in both for a while, yet, at

the last, except truth itself can deceive us, the issue must fall on my side. O God, be thou my portion, and the lot of mine inheritance: let the scum of the world spit in my face, as the most despicable of all creatures: I am above the despight of men and devils, and am secretly happy, and shall be eternally glorious.

XXXV.

ACCEPTATION OF DESIRES.

WHAT a comfort it is to us weak wretches, that we have to deal with a merciful God, that measures us, not by our performances, but by the truth of our desires! David had a good mind to build God a house; his hands were too bloody to lay the foundation of so holy a fabric: yet God takes it as kindly from him, as if he had finished the work; and rewards the intention of building a house to his name, with the actual building of a house to David for ever. Good Hezekiah knew how easy and welcome a suit he made, when, after all endeavours of sanctifying the people for the celebration of that great passover, he prayed, *The Lord pardon every one, that prepareth his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary;* 2 Chron. xxx. 18, 19. Alas, we cannot be but lame, in all our obediences. What can fall from defective causes, but imperfect effects? If we pray, we are apt to entertain unmeet notions of the Infinite Spirit to whom we address our supplications, and sudden glances of wandering thoughts: if we read or hear, we are subject to vain distractions: if we approach God's Table, our souls fail of that exact preparation and purity, wherewith they should be decked, when they come to that celestial banquet: if we do the works of justice or mercy, it is not without some light touch of self-respect; and, well may we say with the blessed Apostle, *The good, that I would, I do not;* Rom. vii. 19: we should, therefore, find just cause of discouragement in ourselves, if our best actions were to be weighed by their own worth, and not by our better intentions: but that gracious God, who puts good desires into us, is so ready to accept of them, that he looks not so much at what we have done, as at what we wished to have done; and, without respect to our defects, crowns our good affections. All that I can say for myself, O my God, is, that the desire of my heart is to please thee in all things: my comfort then is, though my abilities fail in the performance, yet thy mercies cannot fail in my acceptation.

XXXVI.

HEAVENLY JOYS.

DOUBTLESS, O God, thou, that hast given to men, even thine enemies, here upon earth, so excellent means, to please their outward senses; such beautiful faces and admirable flowers, to delight the eye; such delicate scents from their garden, to please the smell; such curious confections and delicate sauces, to please the taste; such sweet music from the birds, and artificial devices of ravishing

melody from the art of man, to delight the ear; hast much more ordained transcendent pleasures and infinite contentments, for thy glorified Saints above. My soul, while it is thus clogged and confined, is too strait to conceive of those incomprehensible ways of spiritual delectation, which thou hast provided for thy dear chosen ones, triumphing with thee in thy heaven. Oh, teach me to wonder at that, which I cannot here attain to know; and to long for that happiness, which I there hope to enjoy with thee for ever.

XXXVII.

MIXED CONTENTMENTS.

What a fool were I, if I should think to find that, which Solomon could not; contentment upon earth! His greatness, wealth, and wisdom gave him opportunity to search, where my impotency is shut out: were there any thing under heaven free from vanity and vexation, his curious inquisition could not have missed it. No, alas, all our earthly contentments are like a Jewish Passover, which we must eat with sour herbs. Have I wealth? I cannot be void of cares: have I honour? I cannot be rid of envy: have I knowledge? *He, that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow;* saith the kingly Preacher: have I children? it were strange, if without crosses: have I pleasures? not without sting: have I health? not without the threats of disease: have I full diet? not without the inconveniences of satiety: have I beauty? not without a snare to my soul. Thus it is, in all our sublunary comforts: I cannot have the rose, but I must be content with the prickles. Pure and absolute pleasure dwells elsewhere, far above the reach of this vale of misery. O God, give me to seek it there only; not without a contemptuous neglect of all those deceitful vanities, which would withdraw my soul from thee: and there let me find it, while I am here, by faith; when I remove hence, by personal fruition. In the mean time, let me take what thou givest me with patience and thankfulness; thankfulness for the meat, and patience with the sauce.

XXXVIII.

TRUE WEALTH.

All a man's wealth, or poverty, is within himself: it is not the outward abundance or want, that can make the difference. Let a man be never so rich in estate, yet if his heart be not satisfied, but he is still whining, and scraping, and pining for more, that man is miserably poor: all his bags cannot make him other, than a stark beggar. On the other side, give me a man of small means, whose mind is thoroughly content with a little, and enjoys his pittance with a quiet and thankful heart, that man is exceeding rich: all the world cannot rob him of his wealth. It is not having, by which we can measure riches; but enjoying. The earth hath all treasures in it, yet no man styles it rich. Of these, which the world call goods of fortune, only opinion sets the value. Gold and silver

would be metals, whether we think them so, or not: they would not be riches, if men's conceit and institution did not make them such. O my soul, be not thou carried away with the common error, to covet and admire those things, which have no true worth in themselves: if both the Indies were thine, thou shouldst be no whit the wealthier: labour for those riches, whereby thy stock may be advanced. The great Lord of All, who knows best where his wealth lies, and where thou shouldst hoard up thine, hath told thee, where to seek it, where to lay it: *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven;* Matt. vi. 19, 20. There, thou shalt be sure to find it entire; free from plunder, and all danger of diminution. O God, give me to covet, that my mind may be rich in knowledge; that my soul may be rich in grace; that my heart may be rich in true contentation: as for this pelf of the world, let it make them miserable, that admire it.

XXXIX.

FALSE LIGHT.

Looking forth, one starry evening, my eye met with a glorious light, that seemed fairer than its fellows. While I was studying what planet it might be, it suddenly glided down, and vanished. O God, how can we hope to avoid delusions upon earth, when even the face of heaven may thus deceive us? It is no otherwise in the firmament of the Church: how many have there been, that have seemed eternally fixed in that high sphere, which have proved no other than base meteors, gilded with fair beams! they appeared stars; their substance was but slime. Woe were to the earth, if a true star should fall. Yea, I doubt whether the fabric of heaven would stand, if one of those glorious lights should drop down. If, therefore, the star Wormwood shall fall, and embitter the waters, he shall shew himself to be but a false star, and a true impostor; else heaven should fall, as soon as he. O my God, give me grace to know the truth of my substance, and the firmness of my station: let me hate all counterfeit exaltations: let me know myself the least and most insensible star of thy galaxy: so shall I be happy in thee; and thou shalt be by me glorified.

XL.

THE HASTE OF DESIRE.

How slowly the hours seem to pace, when we are big with the desire and expectation of any earthly contentment! We are ready to chide the time for standing still, when we would over-hasten the fruition of our approaching comfort. So the school-boy longs for his play-day; the apprentice, for his freedom; the ward, for his livery; the bride, for her nuptials; the heir, for his inheritance: so approvedly true is that of wise Solomon, *Hope deferred makes the heart sick;* Prov. xiii. 12. Were it not, O my soul, for that wretched infidelity, which cleaves so close unto thee, thou couldst

not but be thus affected to thy heaven; and shouldst be yet so much more, as the joys there are infinitely more exquisite than those, which this earth can afford. Surely, thou dost but flatter me with the over-weening conceit of the firm apprehension of my faith, while I find thee so cool in the longing desires of thy glorification. What! hast thou no stomach to thy happiness? Hath the world benumbed thee with such a dull stupidity, that thou art grown regardless and insensible of eternal blessedness? Oh, shake off this lethargic heaviness of spirit, which hath possessed thee; and rouse up thyself to those ardent desires of glory, which have sometimes enflamed thee. Yea, Lord, do thou stir up that heavenly fire, that now lies raked up in the embers of my soul; and ravish my heart, with a longing desire of thy salvation.

XLI.

DEATH'S REMEMBRANCERS.

EVERY thing, that I see, furnishes me with fair monitions of my dissolution. If I look into my garden, there I see some flowers fading, some withered: if I look to the earth, I see that mother, in whose womb I must lie: if I go to Church, the graves, that I must step over in my way, shew me what I must trust to: if I look to my table, death is in every dish; since what I feed on, did once live: if I look into my glass, I cannot but see death in my face: if I go to my bed, there I meet with sleep, the image of death; and the sheets, which put me in mind of my winding up: if I look into my study, what are all those books, but the monuments of other dead authors? O my soul, how canst thou be unmindful of our parting, when thou art plied with so many monitors? Cast thine eyes abroad into the world, what canst thou see, but killing and dying? Cast thine eyes up into heaven, how canst thou but think of the place of thy approaching rest? How justly then may I say with the Apostle, *By our rejoicing, which I have in Christ Jesus, I die daily!* 1 Cor. xv. 31. And, Lord, as I daily die, in the decay of this frail nature; so let me die daily, in my affection to life, in my preparation for death. Oh, do thou fit me for that last and happy change. Teach me so to number my days, that I may apply my heart to wisdom, and address it to ensuing glory.

XLII.

FAITH'S VICTORY.

WE are here in a perpetual warfare, and fight we must: surely, either fight or die. Some there are, that do both: that is, according as the quarrel is, and is managed. There are those, that fight against God: these, meddling with so unequal a match, cannot look to prevail. Again, the flesh warreth against the spirit: this intestine rebellion cannot hope to prosper. But if, with the Chosen Vessel, I can say, *I have fought a good fight*, (2 Tim. iv. 7), I can neither lose life, nor miss of victory. And what is that good fight?

Even the same Apostle tells me, *The fight of faith;* 1 Tim. vi. 12. This is the good fight indeed; both in the cause, and managing, and the issue. Lo, this faith it is, that wins God to my side; that makes the Almighty mine; that not only engages him in my cause, but unites me to him, so as his strength is mine. *In the power of his might*, therefore, I cannot but be victorious over all my spiritual enemies, by the only means of this faith. For Satan, this *shield of faith* is it, that shall *quench all the fiery darts of that wicked one;* Eph. vi. 16. For the world; *this is the victory that overcomes the world; even our faith;* 1 John v. 4. Be sure to find thyself furnished with this grace; and then say, "O my soul, thou hast marched valiantly: the powers of hell shall not be able to stand before thee: they are mighty, and have all advantages of a spiritual nature, of long duration, and experience, of place, of subtlety; yet, this conquering grace of faith is able to give them the foil, and to trample over all the powers of darkness. O my Lord God, do thou arm and fortify my soul, with a lively and stedfast faith in thee; I shall not fear what man nor devil can do unto me: settle my heart in a firm reliance upon thee, and turn me loose to what enemy thou pleasest.

XLIII.

THE UNFAILING FRIEND.

NEXT to the joy of a good conscience, there is no greater comfort upon earth, than the enjoyment of dear friends; neither is there any thing more sad than their parting; and, by how nearer their relations are, so much greater is our sorrow in foregoing them. What moan did good David make, both for Absalom, as a son, though ungracious; and for Jonathan, as a friend! Surely, when our dear ones are pulled away from us, we seem to have limbs torn away from our bodies; yet this is a thing must be looked for: we are given to each other, or lent rather, upon condition of parting: either they must leave us, or we them; a parting there must be, as sure as there was a meeting. It is our fault, if we set our hearts too much upon that, which may, yea, which must, be lost. Be wise, O my soul, and make sure of such friends, as thou canst not be bereaved of. Thou hast a God, that hath said, *I will not leave thee nor forsake thee.* It was an easy suit, and already granted, which the holy Psalmist made; *Cast me not off, in the time of old age: forsake me not, when my strength faileth;* Psalm lxxi. 9: and, again, *When my father and my mother forsake me*, in their farewell to a better world, *yet then the Lord will take me up;* Psalm xxvii. 10. It is a happy thing, to have immortal friends. Stick close unto them, O my soul, and rejoice in them evermore; as those, that shall sweetly converse with thee here, and shall at last receive thee into everlasting habitations.

XLIV.

QUIET HUMILITY.

HE is a rare man, that is not wise in his own conceit; and that says not within himself, "I see more than my neighbours:" for we all

are born proud and self-opinionate; and, when we are come to our imaginary maturity, are apt to say, with Zedekiah, to those of better judgment than our own, *Which way went the Spirit of God from me to speak unto thee?* 1 Kings xxii. 24. Hence have arisen those strange varieties of wild paradoxes, both in philosophy and religion, wherewith the world abounds every where. When our fancy hath entertained some uncouth thought, our self-love is apt to hatch it up, our confidence to broach it, and our obstinacy to maintain it; and, if it be not too monstrous, there will not want some credulous fools to abet it: so as, the only way, both to peace and truth, is true humility; which will teach us, to think meanly of our own abilities, to be diffident of our own apprehensions and judgments, to ascribe much to the reverend antiquity, greater sanctity, deeper insight of our blessed predecessors. This only will keep us in the beaten road, without all extravagant deviations to untrodden by-paths. Teach me, O Lord, evermore to think myself no whit wiser than I am: so shall I neither be vainly irregular, nor the Church troublesomely unquiet.

XLV.

SURE MERCIES.

THERE is nothing more troublesome in human society, than the disappoint of trust, and failing of friends: for, besides the disorder, that it works in our own affairs, it commonly is attended with a necessary deficiency of our performances to others. The leaning upon a broken reed gives us both a fall and a wound. Such is a false friend, who, after professions of love and real offices, either slinks from us, or betrays us. This is that, which the great pattern of patience so bitterly complains of, as none of his least afflictions; *My kinsfolk have failed me, and my familiar friends have forgotten me;* Job xix. 14. It went to the heart of David, that his own familiar friend, in whom he trusted, which did eat of his bread, should lift up his heel against him; Psalm xli. 9. And, surely, those, that are stanch and faithful in themselves, cannot but be so much the more deeply affected with the perfidious dealing of others; and yet also so much the more, as their confidence and entireness was greater: this was that, which heightened the vexation of that man, who is so famous for the integrity of his heart: *It was thou, O man, mine equal, my guide, my acquaintance; we took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in company;* Psalm lv. 13, 14. And still, our daily experience gives us miserable instances in this kind. He hath had little to do in the world, that hath not spent many a sigh upon others' faithlessness. And now, O my soul, the more sad proof thou hast had of the untrusty disposition and carriage of men, the more it concerns thee to betake thyself, in all zealous and absolute affiance, unto the sure protection and never-failing providence of thy God; the God, who, being Truth itself, never did, never can forfeit his trust to any soul, that relied upon his most certain promises, upon his promised mercies, upon his merciful and just performances. *My*

soul wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him: he only is my rock and my salvation: in God is my salvation and my glory; the rock of my strength, and my refuge is in God; Psalm lxii. 5—7. It shall not trouble thee to find men false, while thou hast such a true God to have recourse unto.

XLVI.

DANGEROUS PROSPERITY.

It was a just and needful precaution, O God, which thou gavest of old to thine Israel: *When thou shalt have eaten, and art full; then beware, lest thou forget the Lord;* Deut. vi. 11, 12. There was not so great fear of forgetting thee, while they were in a hungry and dry wilderness; although, even there, they did too often forget themselves, in an ungracious murmuring against thee and their leaders: the greatest danger of their forgetting thee would be, thou knewest, when they should come to be pampered in the land that flowed with milk and honey. There it was, that, accordingly, *Jesurun waxed fat, and kicked:* there, being grown thick and covered with fatness, *he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation;* Deut. xxxii. 15. Nothing is more difficult, than to keep ourselves from growing wanton by excess; whereas nature, kept low, is capable of just obedience: like as in the body also, a full feed breeds superfluous and vicious humours; whereas a spare diet keeps it both clean and healthful. Do not I see, O Lord, even the man, that was after thine own heart, while thou keptest him in breath, with the persecution of an unjust master, how tenderly conscientious he was; remorsed in himself, for but cutting off a lap of the robe of his causeless pursuer; 1 Sam. xxiv. 5: who yet, when he came to the full scope of his ease and courtly jollity, made no scruple of the adulterous bed of fair Bathsheba, or the bloody murder of a faithful Uriah. Who was I, O Lord, that I should promise myself an immunity from the peril of a prosperous condition, under which thy holier servants have miscarried? It was thy goodness and wisdom, who foreseest not what shall be only, but what might be also, in prevention of the danger of my surfeit to take away the dish, whereon I might have over-fed. O God, I do humbly submit to thy good pleasure, and contentedly rest upon thy Providence; which hast thought fit rather to secure me in the safe use of my little, than to exercise me with the temptations of a bewitching plenty.

XLVII.

CHEERFUL OBEDIENCE.

It is not so much the work that God stands upon, as the mind of the worker. The same act may be done with the thanks and advantage of one agent, and with frowns and disrespect to another. If we do our business grudgingly, and because we must, out of the necessity of our subsistence, we shall have as much thank to sit still: it is our own need, that sets our hands on work, not our obedience; so as herein, we are our own slaves, not God's servants;

whereas, if we go about the works of our calling cheerfully, offering them up to God as our willing sacrifice, in an humble compliance with his commands, and an awful and comfortable expectation of his gracious acceptance, we are blessed in our holy endeavours, and cannot fail of an Euge from our Master in Heaven. Alas, Lord, it is but little, that I can do; and, without thy enabling, nothing. Thou, that vouchsafest to give me an abilitation to the work, put into me also good affections to thee in performing of it: let me do thy will here, as thy angels do in heaven, with all gracious readiness and alacrity; and be no less glad, that I shall do it, than that it is done: so, while carnal hearts shall languish under their forced tasks, my labour shall be my pleasure; and I shall find unspeakable comfort, both in the conscience of my act, and the crown of my obedience.

XLVIII.

HEAVENLY ACCORDANCE.

As our condition here upon earth is different, so must our affection needs be also. That, which is one man's joy is another's grief; one man's fear is another man's hope: neither can it be otherwise, while our occasions draw us to so manifest contradictions of disposition. These diversities and contrarieties of inclination and desire, are the necessary symptoms of our wretched mortality; and, the nearer we grow to the perfection of our blessedness, the more shall we concentrate in the united scope of all our actions and affections, which is the sole glory of our Creator. Know then, O my soul, that the closer thou canst gather up thyself in all the exercises of thy faculties, and proposals of thy desires, to the only respect of the honour of that great and good God, which gave thee thy being, thou aspirest so much nearer to thy heaven, where all the blessed saints and angels agree together, in one perpetual employment of praising their Maker; and sweetly accord in that one most perfect ditty and note of an eternal Hallelujah to him, that sits upon the throne of that celestial glory. O God, do thou draw in my heart more and more from this variety of earthly distractions, and fix it upon this one heavenly work: put me upon that blessed task here below, which shall never know any end, but endure for ever in heaven.

XLIX.

DIVINE BOUNTY.

HAD not the Apostle said so, yet our own sense and experience would have told us, that *every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights;* James i. 17: for, sure, from below, it cannot come. How should any perfect gift arise from the region of all imperfection? How should evil afford any good? What is below, but earth and hell? whereof the one yields nothing, but torment; the other, nothing, but misery and sin. If, therefore, it be perfect or good, since nothing can give what it hath not, it must needs come from above, And, from

whom, above? Not from those lightsome bodies of the stars, whose influences cannot reach unto the soul; whose substance is not capable of any spiritual power, whether to have or give perfect gifts: not from the blessed spirits, which are angels of light; they may help, through God's gracious appointment, to convey blessings to us; they neither will or can challenge an original and primary interest in the blessings which they convey: only, therefore, from the Father of Lights; who, as he is light, so is the Author of all whatsoever light, both inward and outward, spiritual and sensible. And, as light was the first good and perfect gift which he bestowed on the world, so it well may imply all the spiritual blessings conferred on the creature: so as, he, that said, *Let there be light:* said also, "Let this man be wise: let that be learned: let that other be gracious and holy." Whence then, O whence, can I look for any good thing, but from thy hands, O my God, who *givest to all men liberally and upbraidest not;* James i. 5: whose infinite treasure is not capable of any diminution; since, the more thou givest, thy store is not the less, thy glory more. Thou dost not sell thy favours, as we men are apt to do, looking through our small bounty, at an expected retribution; but thou givest most freely, most absolutely: neither dost thou lend thy best blessings, as looking to receive them back again, but so conveyest them to us, as to make them our own for ever: since, therefore, thy gifts are so free, that all thy heavenly riches may be had for asking; how worthy shall I be to want them, if I do not sue for them to the Throne of thy Grace! Yet even this, since it is a good thing, I cannot do, without thee: Oh, then, give thou me the grace, that I may be ever begging faithfully of thee; and give me the graces, that I beg for.

L.

SWEET USE OF POWER.

I SEE that great, wise, and holy God, who might most justly make use of his absolute power; yet proceeds sweetly with his creature, in all his ways. He might force some to salvation, in spite of their will: he might damn others, merely for his pleasure, without respect to their sin: but he doth not, he will not do either of these; but goes along graciously and gently with us, inviting us to repentance, and earnestly tendering to us the means of salvation; on the one side, with effectual persuasions, and strong motives, and kindly inclinations to an answerable obedience; on the other side, laying before us the fearful menaces of his judgments denounced against sinners, urging all powerful dissuasions, and using all probable means to divert us from all the ways of wickedness, and, when those prevail not, justly punishing us for our wilful disobedience, impenitence, and infidelity. O God, how should we learn of thee to proceed with all our fellow-creatures, but much more with our Christian brethren, not according to the rigour of any pretended prerogative of power; but in all merciful tenderness, in all gentle and fair means of their reclamation on the one

side, and, on the other, in an unwilling and constrained severity of necessary justice! And, how much doth it concern thee, O my soul, not to stay till thy God shall drag thee to repentance and salvation; but gladly to embrace all those happy opportunities, and cheerfully to yield to all those merciful solicitations, which thy God offers thee for thy full conversion; and carefully to avoid those ways of sin and death, which he hath, under so dreadful denunciations, graciously warned thee to shun: else, thy God is cleared, both in his justice and mercy; and thy perdition is of thyself!

LI.

THE POWER OF CONSCIENCE.

It is a true word of the Apostle, *God is greater than our conscience;* and, surely, none but he: under that great God, the supreme power on earth is the conscience. Every man is a little world within himself; and, in this little world, there is a court of judicature erected, wherein, next under God, the conscience sits as the supreme judge, from whom there is no appeal; that passeth sentence upon us, upon all our actions, upon all our intentions; for our persons, absolving one, condemning another; for our actions, allowing one, forbidding another. If that condemn us, in vain shall all the world beside acquit us; and, if that clear us, the doom, which the world passeth upon us, is frivolous and ineffectual. I grant this judge is sometimes corrupted, with the bribes of hope, with the weak fears of loss, with an undue respect of persons, with powerful importunities, with false witnesses, with forged evidences, to pass a wrong sentence upon the person or cause; for which he shall be answerable to him, that is higher than the highest; but yet this doom, though reversible by the tribunal of heaven, is still obligatory on earth: so as it is my fault, that my conscience is misled; but it is not my fault, to follow my conscience. How much need have I therefore, O my God, to pray, that thou wouldest guide my conscience aright; and keep this great judge in my bosom, from corruption and error! and what need hath this intestine arbiter of mine, to take special care, that he may avoid all misinformations, that may mislead his judgment; and all the base suggestions of outward advantage or loss, that may deprave his affections! And, O thou, that only art greater than my conscience, keep me from doing ought against my conscience: I cannot disobey that, but I must offend thee; since that is but thine officer under thee, and only commands for thee.

LII.

PROUD POVERTY.

That, which wise Solomon observed in the temporal estates of men, holds no less true in the spiritual: *There is, that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: there is, that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches;* Prov. xiii. 7. On the one side, we meet with a proud, but beggarly Laodicean, that says, *I am rich, and increased*

with goods, and have need of nothing; which will not know that he is *wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked;* Rev. iii. 17: this man, when the means of further grace are tendered him, can say, as Esau did of the proffered herds, *I have enough, my brother;* and, with the bragging Pharisee, can boast of what he is not, and of what he is; of what he hath, of what he doth; admiring his own nothing, and not caring to seek for more, because he thinks he hath all: this fond Justiciary can over-do his duty, and supererogate; contemning the poverty of souls better furnished than his own, and laying his merits in the dish of the Almighty. On the other side, there is an humble soul, that is secretly rich in all spiritual endowments, full of knowledge, abounding in grace, which, out of the true poverty of spirit, undervalues himself; and makes no shew of ought, but a bemoaned disability: as we have seen those grounds, wherein the richest mines are treasured, bewray nothing but barrenness in their outside. O my soul, what estimation soever others may set upon thee, thou art conscious enough of thy own wants: be thankful for the little thou hast, and abased for the much thou lackest; and, if thou wilt needs be advancing thyself above others, let it be in the contestation of thy greater humbleness and lower dejection: thy grace shall be no less, because thou thinkest it so; but shall rather multiply, by a modest diminution. And, O Blessed Lord, thou, who *resistest the proud, and givest grace to the humble,* give me more humility, that I may receive more grace from thee: and thou, whose gracious rain shelves down from the steep mountains and sweetly drenches the humble vallies, depress thou my heart more and more with true lowliness of spirit; that the showers of thy heavenly grace may soak into it, and make it more fruitful in all good affections and all holy obedience.

LIII.

THE HAPPIEST SOCIETY.

I FIND, O Lord, some holy men, that have gone aside from the world into some solitary wilderness, that they might have their full scope of enjoying thee freely, without any secular avocations; who, no doubt, improved their perfect leisure to a great entireness of conversation with thee. Surely, I could easily admire the report of their holiness, and emulate their mortified retiredness, if I did not hear them say, The wolf dwells in the wood; and that they could as soon leave themselves, as the world behind them. There is no desert so wild, no mountains or rocks so craggy, wherein I would not gladly seek thee, O my God, and which I would not willingly climb up to find thee, if I could hope that solitude would yield a spiritual advantage of more enjoying thee: but, alas, I find our weak powers are subject to an unavoidable lassitude; and we can no more contemplate always those divine objects, than our bodily eyes are able to fix themselves on the body of the sun in his brightest splendour: so as, if our minds should not be sometime taken off with a safe variety of cogitations

we should be overwhelmed with thy glory; and, with too much light, blinded. By this means it comes to pass, that these small interspirations set an edge upon our reassumed speculations, and renewed devotions: although also, in the mean time, I should hate all secular diversions, if they should take thee for a moment quite out of my sight; if I did not find, that I may refer them to thee, and enjoy thee in them. O God, do thou so fix my soul upon thee, that whatever occasion shall take me up, I may never be out of thy blessed society; and make me so insensible of the noise of the world, that, even in the midst of the market, I may be still alone with thee.

LIV.

HONEY FROM THE ROCK.

O God, thou didst miraculously refresh thy murmuring Israel of old with water, out of the rock, in that dry wilderness: and now I hear thee say, If they had hearkened to thy voice, and walked in thy ways, with honey out of the rock thou wouldest have satisfied them; Psalm lxxxi. 16. Lo, that, which thou wouldest have done to thine ancient people, if they had obeyed thee, thou hast abundantly performed to thine Evangelical Israel: with honey, out of the Rock, hast thou satisfied them: the Rock, that followed them, was Christ my Saviour; 1 Cor. x. 4. Lo, out of this Rock hath flowed that honey, whereby our souls are satisfied. *Out of his side*, saith the Evangelist, *came water and blood.* This Rock of our Salvation affordeth both what Israel had, and might have had. Surely, O my God, there can be no honey so sweet, as the effect of the precious blood of my Saviour to the soul of the believer: by that blood, we have *eternal redemption* from death, and *remission of all our sins;* Heb. ix. 12. Eph. i. 7: by that blood, are we *justified* in the sight of our God, and *saved from the wrath to come;* Rom. v. 9: by that blood, we have our *peace* made in heaven, and are fully *reconciled to our God;* Col. i. 20: by that blood, we are cleansed and *purged* from all our iniquity; Heb. ix. 22: by that blood we are *sanctified* from our corruptions; Heb. xiii. 12. 1 Pet. i. 2: by that blood, we receive *the promises* and possessions *of an eternal inheritance;* Heb. ix. 15. O the spiritual honey so sweet, that the material honey is but bitterness to it! Jonathan of old did but dip his spear, in the honey of the wood; and, but with one lick of that sweet moisture, had his eyes cleared, and his spirits revived; 1 Sam. xiv. 29. O God, let me but taste and see how sweet the Lord Jesus is, in all his gracious promises, in all his merciful and real performances, I shall need no more to make me happy. Thy Solomon bids me to eat honey; Prov. xxiv. 13. Lo, this is the honey, that I desire to eat of: give me of this honey, and I shall receive both clearness to my eyes, and vigour of my spirits to the foiling of all my spiritual enemies. This is not the honey, whereof I am bidden not to eat too much; Prov. xxv. 16. No, Lord, I can never eat enough of this celestial honey: here I cannot surfeit; or, if

I could, this surfeit would be my health. O God, give me still enough of this honey out of the Rock: so shall my soul live, and bless thee, and be blessed of thee.

LV.

SURE EARNEST.

O MY God, what a comfortable assurance is this, which thou hast given to my soul! Thou hast, in thy great mercy, promised and agreed to give me heaven; and now, because thou dost not put me into a present possession, thou hast given me earnest of my future inheritance; Eph. i. 14: and this earnest is that Good Spirit of thine, which thou hast graciously put into my soul. Even we men, whose style is deceitful upon the balance, think ourselves sure, when, in civil transactions, we have received an earnest of the bargain; and, much more, when we have taken that small piece of coin, as part of the bargained payment: how then can I fear thee to fail, my God, whose title is *Faithful and True;* whose word is *Yea and Amen?* It is ordinary with the world, to cheat my soul with fair promises and faithless engagements, of yielding me those contentments, which it neither can, nor meant to perform: but, for thee, O Lord, *heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot of thy word shall pass unfulfilled;* Matth. xxiv. 35. Hadst thou then but given me that word of thine, I durst have set my soul upon it with all firm confidence; but, now that thou hast seconded thy word with thy earnest, what place can be left for my doubt? What then, what is it, that thou canst stick at, O my soul? Canst thou make question of the truth of the earnest? thou knowest, that thou canst not: the stamp is too well known, to be disdoubted: the impressions are full and inimitable: this seal cannot be counterfeit: the graces of the Spirit, which thou hast received, thou feelest to be true and real: thou findest in thyself a faith, though weak, yet sincere; and unfeigned repentance, joined with a hearty detestation of all thy sins; a fervent love of that infinite goodness, that hath remitted them; a conscionable care to avoid them; a zealous desire, to be approved to God, in all thy ways: flesh and blood cannot have wrought these graces in thee: it is only that Good Spirit of thy God, which hath thus sealed thee to the day of redemption. Walk on, therefore, O my soul, confidently and cheerfully, in the strength of this assurance; and joyfully expect the full accomplishment of this happy contract, from the sure hands of thy God: let no temptation stagger thee, in the comfortable resolutions of thy future glory; but say boldly, with that holy Patriarch, *O Lord, I have waited for thy salvation.*

LVI.

HEAVENLY MANNA.

VICTORY itself is the great reward of our fight; but what is it, O God, that thou promisest to give us, as the reward of our victory?

even the *Hidden Manna:* surely, were not this gift exceeding precious, thou wouldest not reserve it, for the remuneration of so glorious a conquest. Behold that material and visible manna, which thou sentest down from heaven, to stop the mouth of murmuring Israel, perished in their use; and, if it were reserved but to the next day, putrefied; and, instead of nourishing, annoyed them: but the hidden manna, that was laid up in the ark, was incorruptible; as a lasting monument of thy power and mercy to thy people. But now, alas, what is become both of that manna, and that ark? Both are vanished, having passed through the devouring jaws of time, into mere forgetfulness. It is the true Spiritual Manna, that came down from the highest heaven, and, ascending thither again, is hidden there, in the glorious ark of eternity, that thou wilt give to thy conqueror: that is it, which, being participated of here below, nourisheth us to eternal life; and, being communicated to us above, is the full consummation of that blessed life and glory. Oh, give me so to fight, that I may overcome; that so overcoming, I may be feasted with this manna. Thou, that art, and hast given me thyself, the Spiritual Manna, which I have fed on by faith; and the Symbolical Manna, whereof I have eaten sacramentally; give me of that Heavenly Manna, whereof I shall partake in glory. It is yet a *Hidden Manna,* hid from the eyes of the world; yea, in a sort, from our own; hid, in light inaccessible: for, *Our life is hid with Christ in God;* Col. iii. 3. but shall then be fully revealed: for it shall then not only cover the face of the earth round about the tents of Israel, but spread itself over the face of the whole heaven; yea, fill both heaven and earth. I well thought, O my God, that if heaven could afford any thing more precious than other, thou wouldest lay it up for thy victor: for it is a hard service, that thy poor infantry here upon earth are put unto, to conflict with so mighty, so malicious, so indefatigable enemies; and therefore the reward must be so much the greater, as the warfare is more difficult. Oh, do thou, who art the great Lord of Hosts, give me courage to fight, perseverance in fighting, and power to overcome all my spiritual enemies; that I may receive from thee this *Hidden Manna,* that my soul may live for ever, and may for ever bless thee.

LVII.

THE HEART'S TREASURE.

It is a sure word of thine, O Saviour, that where our treasure is, there our hearts will be also; neither can we easily know, where to find our hearts, if our treasure did not discover them. Now, Lord, where is my treasure? Surely, I am not worthy to be owned of thee, if my treasure be any where, but in heaven: my lumber and luggage may be here on earth; but my treasure is above: there thou hast laid up for me the richest of thy mercies, even my eternal salvation. Yea, Lord, what is my richest treasure, but thyself; in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, yea of infinite glory are laid up, for all thine? All things, that this world can af-

ford me, are but mere pelf, in comparison of this treasure; or, if the earth could yield ought that is precious, yet I cannot call that treasure. Treasure implies both price, and store of the dearest commodities: never so great abundance of base things cannot make a treasure; neither can some few pieces of the richest metals be so accounted; but where there is a large congestion of precious jewels and metals, there only is treasure. If any at all, surely very little and mean is the wealth, which I can promise myself here: perhaps, some brass farthing, or light and counterfeit coin; mere earthly dross, which may load, but cannot enrich my soul. My only true riches are above, with thee; and, where then should my heart be, but there? My hand and my brain too, must necessarily be sometimes here below; but my heart shall be still with my treasure in heaven. It is wont to be said, that, however the memory of old age is short, yet that no old man ever forgot where he laid up his treasure. O God, let not that Celestial Treasure, which thou hast laid up for me, be at any time out of my thoughts: let my eye be ever upon it; let my heart long for the full possession of it; and so joy in the assured expectation of it, that it may disrelish all the contentments, and contemn all the crosses, which this world can afford me.

LVIII.

THE NARROW WAY.

O Saviour, I hear thee say, *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life*, and yet again, thou, who art Truth itself, tellest me, that *the way is narrow, and the gate strait, that leadeth unto life.* Surely, thou, who art the living Way, art exceeding large; so wide, that all the world of believers enter into life by thee only: but the way of our walk towards thee is strait and narrow. Not, but that *thy commandment* in itself *is exceeding broad;* Psalm cxix. 96: for, Lord, how fully comprehensive it is of all moral and holy duties! and what gracious latitude hast thou given us in it, of our obedience! and how favourable indulgence and remission, in case of our failings! but narrow, in respect of the weakness and insufficiency of our obedience: it is our wretched infirmity, that straitens our way to thee. Lo, heaven, which is thy all-glorious mansion, when we are once entered into it, how infinitely large and spacious it is! even this lower contignation of it, at how marvellous distance it archeth in this globe of air, and earth, and waters! and how is that again surrounded, with several heights of those lightsome regions, unmeasurable for their glorious dimensions! But, the heaven of heavens, the seat of the blessed, is yet so much larger; as it is higher in place, and more eminent in glory: yet, thou wouldest have the way to it narrow, and the gate of it strait. And even thus it pleaseth thee to ordain, in the dispensation of all thine inferior blessings: learning dwells far within; but the entrance is strait through study, watching, bending of brains, wearing of spirits: the house of honour is sumptuous and goodly within; but the gate is strait, that leads into it; which is through danger, attendance, plots of

emulation: wealth hath large elbow-room of lodging; but the gate is strait; hard labour, careful thrift, racking of thoughts, painful adventures. How much more wouldest thou have it thus, in the best of all blessings, the eternal fruition of heaven! And why is this way narrow, but because it is untracked and untrodden? If I may not rather say, the way is untracked and found by few, because it is narrow, and not easy to tread in. Surely, grace is the way to glory; and that path is not for every foot: the straiter and narrower it is, O my God, the more let me strive and shoulder to enter into it. What vain quarrels do we daily hear of, for the way; but, Lord, enable me to strive, for this way, even to blood. And, if thou hast been pleased to set me a deep way, or a rough way, through many tribulations, to that happy and eternal life, let me pass it with all cheerful resolution. How oft have I not grudged to go a foul way to a friend's house, where I knew my entertainment kind and cordial! Oh, let me not think much, to come to those thy everlasting mansions of bliss, through tears and blood: the end shall make an abundant amends for the way: if I suffer with thee, I shall reign with thee.

LIX.

GOD'S VARIOUS PROCEEDINGS.

WHAT strange varieties do I find, in the workings of God with man! one where, I find him gently and plausibly inviting men to their conversion; another where, I find him frighting some others to heaven: some, he trains up in a goodly education, and, without any eminent change, calls them forth to an exemplary profession of his name; some others, he chuseth out of a life notoriously lewd, to be the great patterns of a sudden reformation: one, that was only formal in his devotion without any true life of grace, is, upon a grievous sickness, brought to a lively sense of godliness; another comes to God's house with a purpose to sleep or scoff, and, through the secret operation of God's Spirit working with his word, returns full of true compunction of heart, with tears in his eyes, and resolutions of present amendment of life: one, that was proud of his own righteousness, is suffered to fall into some foul sin, which shames him before men, and is thus brought down to an humble acknowledgment of his own frailty; another, that was cast down with a sad despair of God's mercy, is raised up by the fall of an unbroken glass, or by some comfortable dream, or by the seasonable word of a cheerful friend: one is called at the sixth hour; another, not till the eleventh: one, by fair and probable means; another, by contraries; so as even the work of Satan himself hath been made the occasion of the conversion of his soul. O God, thy ways are infinite, and past finding out. It is not for us to prescribe thee what to do, but humbly to adore thee in what thou doest. Far be it from me, so to cast myself upon thy all-working Providence as to neglect the ordinary means of my salvation. Enable me cheerfully to endeavour what thou requirest, and then take what way thou

pleasest; so that thou bringest me to the end of my hope, the salvation of my soul.

LX.

THE WAKING GUARDIAN.

It is a true word, which the Psalmist said of thee, O God: Thou, that keepest Israel, neither slumberest, nor sleepest; Psalm cxxi. 4. Fond tyrants think that thou winkest at their cruel persecutions of thy Church, because thou dost not speedily execute vengeance upon them; whereas, if the fault were not in their eyes, they should see thine wide open, and bent upon them for their just destruction: only, thou thinkest fit to hold thy hand, for a time, from the infliction of judgment, till the measure of their iniquity be full; and then, they shall feel to their cost, that thou sawest all their secret plots and conspiracies against thine Israel. The time was, O Saviour, when, in the days of thy human infirmity, thou sleptest in the stern of the ship, on a pillow, when the tempest raged and the waves swelled; yet even then, when thy disciples awoke thee, and said, *Lord, save us, we perish*, thou rebukedst them sharply with, *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?* Matth. viii. 24—26. Mark iv. 37—40. Luke viii. 23—25. Their danger was apparently great: but yet thou tellest them their fear was causeless; and their faith weak, that they could not assure themselves, that thy presence, though sleeping, was a sufficient preservative against the fury of winds and waters: how much more now, that being in the height of thy heavenly glory, and ever intentively vigilant for the safeguard of thy chosen ones, may we rest secure of thy blessed protection, and our sure indemnity! O God, do thou keep my eyes ever open, that I may still wait upon thee, for thy gracious tuition, and the merciful accomplishment of thy salvation. Thou seest I have to do with those enemies, that are never but waking, never but seeking all advantages against my soul: what can they do, when thine eye is ever over me for good? Oh, then, let mine eyes be ever unto thee, O God my Lord: in thee let me still put my trust: so shalt thou keep me from the snares that they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity; Psalm cxli. 8, 9.

LXI.

THE STING OF GUILTINESS.

Guiltiness can never think itself sure, if there were no fiends to torment it: like a bosom-devil, it would ever torment itself: no guard can be so sure, no fort so strong, as to secure it from terrors. The first murderer, after his bloody fratricide, when there is no mention of any man, beside his father, upon earth; yet can say, *It shall come to pass, that every one, that findeth me, shall slay me*; Gen. iv. 14: and I marvel, that he added not, "If none else will do it, I shall do that deadly office to myself." He was sure he could meet with none, but brethren or nephews; and even the face of those was now dreadful to him: he, that had been so cruel, to him,

that had lain in the same womb with himself, fears, that no nearness of blood can shield him, from the violence of the next man. Conscience, when once exasperated, needs not stay for an accuser, a witness, a solicitor to enforce the evidence, a judge; but itself alone acts all these parts; and, ofttimes also, the executioner's, to boot. It was a just question of the wisest of men, *A wounded spirit who can bear?* but, there are divers and different degrees of the wounds of spirit: all are painful, some mortal. As, in the body, there may be some wounds in the outward and fleshly part, which have more pain than peril; but those of the principal and vital parts are not more dolorous than dangerous, and often deadly: so it is in the soul; there are wounds of the inferior and affective faculties, as grief for crosses, vexation for disappointment of hopes, pangs of anger for wrongs received, which may be cured with seasonable remedies; but the wounds of conscience, inflicted by the sting of some heinous sin, which lies belking within us, carries in it horror, despair, death. O God, keep me from blood-guiltiness, and from all crying and presumptuous sins; but, if ever my frailty should be so foully tainted, do thou so work upon my soul, as that my repentance may walk in equal paces with my sin, ere it can aggravate itself by continuance. Apply thy sovereign plaister to my soul, while the wound is green; and suffer it not to fester inwardly, through any impenitent delay.

LXII.

BENEFICIAL WANT.

It is just with thee, O God, when thou seest us grow wanton, and unthankfully neglective of thy blessings, to withdraw them from us; that, by the want of them, we may feel both our unregarded obligations, and the defects of our duty: so we have seen the nurse, when the child begins to play with the dug, to put up the breast out of sight. I should not acknowledge how precious a favour health is, if thou didst not sometimes interchange it with sickness; nor how much I am bound to thee for my limbs, if I had not sometimes a touch of lameness. Thirst gives better relish to the drink; and hunger is the best sauce to our meat. Nature must needs affect a continuance of her welfare; neither is any thing more grievous to her, than these cross interceptions of her contentments: but thou, who art Wisdom itself, knowest how fit it is for us, both to smart for our neglect of thy familiar mercies, and to have thy blessings more endeared to us by a seasonable discontinuance. Neither dost thou want to deal otherwise, in the managing of thy spiritual mercies. If thy Spouse, the faithful soul, shall, being pampered with prosperity, begin to grow secure and negligent; so as, at the first knock of her beloved, she rise not up to open to him, but suffers his head to be filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night, she soon finds her beloved withdrawn and gone: she may then seek him, and not find him; she may call and receive no answer; she may seek him about the streets, and, instead of finding him, lose her veil, and meet with blows and wounds from the watchmen; Cant. v. 2—7. O God, keep thou me from being resty with

ease: hold me in a continual tenderness of heart: continue me in a thankful and awful use of all thy favours: but, if, at any time, thou seest me decline to a careless obduration, and to a disrespective forgetfulness of thy mercies, do thou so chastise me with the fatherly hand of thy afflictions, and so work me to a gracious use of thy desertions; that my soul may seek thee with more vigour of affections, and may recover thee with more sensible comfort.

LXIII.

INTERCHANGE OF CONDITIONS.

It is not for nothing, O my God, that thou hast protracted my time so long, and hast given me so large experience of thy most wise and holy dealing with myself and others. Doubtless, it is, that I might see, and feel, and observe, and teach the gracious changes of thy carriage towards thy poor sinful creatures upon earth. Thou dost not hold us always under the rod, though we well deserve a perpetual correction; as considering our miserable impotence, and aptness to a heartless dejection. Thou dost not always keep our hearts raised up to the jollity of a prosperous condition; as knowing our readiness to presume, and to be carried away with a false confidence of our unmoveableness: but graciously interchangest thy favours with our sufferings. When thou seest us ready to faint, and to be discouraged with our adversity, thou takest off thy hand, and givest us a comfortable respiration from our miseries: when thou seest us puffed up with the vain conceit of our own worth or success, thou takest us down with some heavy cross. When thou findest us overlaid with an unequal match, and ready to be foiled in the fight, thou givest us breath, and puttest new strength into our arms, and new courage into our hearts: when thou findest us insolent with our victory, thou shamest us by an unexpected discomfiture. And, as for the outward estate of the nations and kingdoms of the earth, thou whirlest them about in a perpetual yet constant vicissitude: peace breeds plenty; plenty, wantonness and pride; pride, animosity; from thence follows war; war produces vastation and want; poverty causeth industry; and, when nothing is left to strive for, peace; an industrious peace brings plenty again: and, in this gyre, thou hast ordained the world still to turn about. Be not too much moved then, O my soul, when thou findest thyself hard pressed with afflictions, and conflicted with strong temptations; but bear up constantly, in the strength of thy faith, as being assured, that, having rid out this storm, thou shalt be blessed with a happy calm: neither be thou lifted up too much, when thou findest thyself carried on with a fair gale of prosperity; since thou knowest not what tempests may suddenly arise, and many a hopeful vessel hath been sunk in sight of the port. And, when thou seest the world every where full of woeful combustions, be not over-much dismayed with the sight and sense of these public calamities; but wait patiently upon that Divine Providence, which, after those revolutions of change, shall happily reduce all things to their determinate posture. To which purpose, O God, do thou fix my heart firmly upon thee: do thou keep me from the evil of pros-

perity, from dejectedness in affliction, from the prevalence of temptation, from misprision of thy Providence. Work me to that due temper, which thy Solomon hath prescribed me: *In the day of prosperity, be joyful: but, in the day of adversity, consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him;* Eccl. vii. 14.

LXIV.

THE RULE OF DEVOTION.

THY will, O God, as it is always holy; so, in what thou hast decreed to do with us, is secret; and, in what thou wouldest have us do to thee, is revealed. It is thy revealed will, that must regulate both our actions and our prayers. It may be, that I may lawfully sue to thee, for what thou hast decreed not to grant: as Samuel ceased not to pray for thy favour to that Saul, whom thou hadst rejected; and many an Israelite prayed for rain, in that three years and a half, wherein thou hadst commanded the clouds to make good the prophecy of thine Elijah; yea, thy holy Apostle prayed thrice to have the messenger of Satan taken off from him, and heard no answer, but, *My grace is sufficient for thee;* 2 Cor. xii. 9. So, Lord, we pray for the removal of thy judgments from this sinful and deplored nation, which for ought we know, and have cause to fear, thou hast decreed to ruin and devastation; and many a good soul prays for a comfortable sense of thy favour, whom thou thinkest fit to keep down for the time in a sad desertion; and I, thy unworthy servant, may pray to be freed from those temptations, wherewith thou seest it fit that my faith should be still exercised. O God, give me the grace to follow thy revealed will, and to submit myself to thy secret. What thou hast commanded, I know I may do: what thou hast promised, I know I may trust to: what thou hast, in a generality, promised to do, may, in some particular cases, by the just decree of thy secret counsel, be otherwise determined. If I ask what thou hast decreed to do, I know I cannot but obtain: if I ask what thou hast warranted, notwithstanding the particular exception of thy secret will, though I receive it not; yet I receive not pardon only, but acceptation. O God, give me grace to steer myself and my prayers by thy revealed will; and humbly to stoop to what the event shews to have been thy secret will.

LXV.

HELL'S TRIUMPH.

THOU hast told us, O Saviour, that there is joy in the presence of thine angels for a sinner's repentance; Luke xv. 10. Those blessed spirits are so far from envying our happiness, that, as they endeavour it here, so they congratulate it in heaven: and, we well know, that these good spirits do not more rejoice in the conversion of a sinner, than the evil spirits do in the miscarriage of a convert. The

course of the holy obedience of thy servants here, is doubtless a pleasing object to thine angels; neither are those malignant spirits less pleased with the wicked practices of their vassals: but the joy arises to both, from the contrary condition of those parties, over which they have prevailed. The allegiance of a good subject, though well-accepted, yet is no news to a gracious sovereign; but the coming in of some great rebel is happy tidings at the court: on the contrary, where there is a rivality of sovereignty, for a professed enemy to do hostile actions, is no other than could be expected; but, for a subject or a domestic servant to be drawn into the conspiracy, is not more advantage than joy to the intruder. O God, thou hast mercifully called me out of the world to a profession of thy Name: I know what eyes those envious spirits have ever upon me: Oh, do thou *lead me in thy righteousness, because of mine enemies;* Psalm v. 8. If thine angels have found cause to joy in my conversion, Oh, do thou keep me from making music in hell by my miscarriage.

LXVI.

DUMB HOMAGE.

How officious, O God, do I see thy poor dumb creatures to us! how do they fawn, or crouch, as they see us affected! how do they run, and fetch, and carry, and draw at our command! how do they bear our stripes with a trembling unresistance! how readily do they spend their strength, and live theirs in our service! how patiently do they yield us their milk and their fleeces, for our advantage; and lie equally still, to be shorn, or slain, at our pleasure! expecting nothing from us, in the mean time, but a bare sustenance, which, if it be denied them, they do not fall furiously upon their cruel masters; but meekly bemoan themselves in their brutish language, and languish, and die: if granted them, they are fattened for our use. I am ashamed, O God, I am ashamed to see these thy creatures so obsequiously pliant unto me, while I consider my disposition and deportment towards thee my Creator. Alas, Lord, what made the difference betwixt me and them, but thy mere good pleasure? thou mightest have made them rational, and have exchanged my reason for their brutality. They are my fellows, by creation; and owe both their being and preservation, to the same hand with myself. Thou art the absolute Lord of both, to whom I must be accountable for them: they are mine, only by a limited substitution from thee: why then should they be more obedient to my will, than I am to thine; since they have only sense to lead them in their way, I have both reason and faith to teach me my duty? Had I made them, I could but require of them their absolute submission: why should I then exact of them, more than I am ready to perform unto thee? O God, thou, that hast put them under my hand, and me under thy own; as thou hast made me their master for command, so let me make them my masters to teach me obedience.

LXVII.

INDIFFERENCY OF EVENTS.

THOU givest us daily proofs, O God, of the truth of that observation of wise Solomon, that *all things come alike to all, and that no man knows love or hatred by all that is before them ;* Eccl. ix. 2. In these outward things, thy dearest friends have not fared better, than thine enemies: thy greatest enemies have not suffered more, than thy beloved children. When, therefore, I look abroad, and see with what heavy afflictions thou art pleased to exercise thy best favourites upon earth, I cannot but stand amazed to see, that horrible torments of all kinds have been undergone by thy most precious martyrs, whose patience hath overcome the violence of their executioners: and to see those extreme tortures, which some of thy faithful servants have endured in the beds of their sickness; one, torn and drawn together with fearful convulsions; another, shrieking under the painful girds of an unremovable stone; one, wrung in his bowels with pangs of cholic, and turning of guts; another, possessed with a raging gout in all his limbs; one, whose bladder, after a painful incision, is ransacked; another, whose leg or arm is cut off, to prevent a mortal gangreen: I cannot but acknowledge how just it might be in thee, O God, to mix the same bitter cup for me; and how merciful it is, that, knowing my weakness, thou hast forborne hitherto to load me with so sad a burthen. What thou hast, in thine eternal council, determined to lay upon me, thou only knowest. If thou be pleased to continue thy gracious indulgence to me still, make me truly thankful to thee for health and ease, as the greatest of thy outward favours; but, let me not build upon them, as the certain evidences of thy better mercies: and, if thou think fit to interchange them with the vicissitude of sickness and pain, let me not misconstrue thy severe chastisements as arguments of thy displeasure. But, still teach me to fear thee, in my greatest prosperity; and to love thee, in my greatest sufferings: and to adore thine infinite wisdom, justice, and mercy in both.

LXVIII.

THE TRANSCENDENT LOVE.

How justly do I marvel, O God, to see what strength of natural affection thou hast wrought in poor brute creatures towards their masters, and towards their own mates, towards their dams and their young! We have plentiful instances of those, whom death could not separate from their beloved guardians: some, that have died for their masters; some, with them: some, that have fearlessly hazarded their own lives for the preservation of their young ones; some, that have fed their aged dams with the food, which they have spared from their own maws. Amongst the rest, how remarkable is that comparison of thine, O Saviour, wherein thou wert pleased to set forth thy tender care of thine Israel, by the resemblance of

gathering her chickens under her wings! Matt. xxiii. 37. How have I seen that poor fowl, after the patience of a painful hatching, clucking her little brood together; and, when she hath perceived the puttock hovering over her head, in a varied note calling them hastily under the wing of her protection, and there covertly hiding them, not from the talons only, but from the eye of that dangerous enemy, till the peril hath been fully over! after which, she calls them forth to their liberty and repast; and, with many a careful scrape, discovers to them such grains of food, as may be fit for them; contenting herself to crave for them, with neglect of her own sustenance. O God, thou, who hast wrought in thy silly creatures such a high measure of indulgence and dearness of respect towards their tender brood, how infinite is thy love and compassion towards the children of men, the great masterpiece of thy creation! How past the admiration of men and angels, is that transcendent proof of thy divine love, in the more than marvellous work of our redemption! How justly glorifiable is thy name, in the gracious and sometimes miraculous preservation of thy children! in the experience whereof, if I forbear to magnify thee, or dare not to trust thee; how can I be but unworthy, to be owned of thee, or blessed by thee?

LXIX.

CHOICE OF SEASONS.

How regularly, O God, hast thou determined a set season for all thy creatures, both for their actions and their use! *The stork in the heaven*, saith thy prophet Jeremy, *knoweth her appointed times, and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow observe the time of their coming*; Jer. viii. 7. Who have seen the stork*, before the calends of August; or a swallow, in the winter? Who hath heard the nightingale, in the heat of harvest; or the bittern, bearing her base in the coldest months? Yea, the Fishes in the sea know and observe their due seasons; and present us with their shoals, only when they are wholesome and useful: the herring doth not furnish our market, in the spring; nor the salmon, or mackerel, in winter. Yea, the very Flies both have and keep their days appointed: the silkworm never looks forth of that little cell of her conception, till the mulberry puts forth the leaves for their nourishment: and who hath ever seen a butterfly, or a hornet, in winter? yea, there are flies, we know, appropriate to their own months, from which they vary not. Lastly, how plain is this, in all the several varieties of Trees, Flowers, Herbs! The almond-tree looks out first, the mulberry last, of all other: the tulip, and the rose, and all other the sweet ornaments of the earth, are punctual in their growth and fall. But as for Man, O God, thou hast, in thy infinite wisdom, endued him with that power of reason, whereby he may make choice of the fittest seasons of all his actions. Thou, that hast ap-

* Oecolampad. in loc. Jerem.

pointed *a time for every purpose under heaven*, Eccl. iii. 1. hast given him wit to find and observe it. Even lawful acts, unseasonably done, may turn evil; and acts indifferent, seasonably performed, may prove good and laudable. The best improvement of morality or civility, may shame us, if due time be not as well regarded, as substance. Only grace, piety, true virtue can never be unseasonable. There are no seasons in Eternity: there shall be one uniform and constant act of glorifying thee: thy angels and saints praise thee above, without change or intermission; the more we can do so on earth, the nearer shall we approach to those blessed spirits. O God, let my heart be wholly taken up evermore, with an adoration of thine Infinite Majesty; and let my mouth be ever sounding forth of thy praise: and let the Hosannahs and Hallelujahs which I begin here, know no measure but Eternity.

LXX.

THE HAPPY RETURN HOME.

EVERY creature naturally affects a return to the original, whence it first came. The pilgrim, though faring well abroad, yet hath a longing homeward: fountains and rivers run back, with what speed they may, to the sea, whence they were derived: all compound bodies return to their first elements: the vapours, rising up from the earth and waters, and condensed into clouds, fall down again to the same earth, whence they were exhaled: this body, that we bear about us, returns at last to that dust, whereof it was framed. And why then, O my soul, dost not thou earnestly desire to return home to the God, that made thee? Thou knowest thy original is heavenly: why are not thy affections so? What canst thou find here below, worthy to either withdraw or detain thee from those heavenly mansions? Thou art here, in a region of sin; of misery and death: glory waits for thee above: fly then, O my soul, fly hence to that blessed immortality, not as yet, in thy dissolution; for which thou must wait on the pleasure of thy dear Maker and Redeemer: yet, in thy thoughts, in thy desires and affections; soar thou up thither, and converse there with that blessed God and Father of Spirits, with those glorious orders of angels, and with the souls of just men made perfect: and, if the necessity of these bodily affairs must needs draw thee off for a time, let it be not without reluctation and hearty unwillingness, and with an eager appetite of quick return to that celestial society. It will not be long, ere thou shalt be blessed with a free and uninterrupted fruition of that glorious eternity: in the mean time, do thou prepossess it, in thy heavenly dispositions; and, contemning this earth, wherewith thou art clogged, aspire to thy heaven, and be happy.

LXXI.

THE CONFINEMENTS OF AGE.

DOST thou not observe, O my soul, how time, and age, co[illegible] and contracts, as our bodies, so our desires and motions here

earth, still into narrower compasses? When we are young, the world is but little enough for us: after we have seen our own island, we affect to cross the seas, and to climb over Alps and Pyrennees, and never think we have roved far enough. When we grow ancient, we begin to be well pleased with rest: now, long and unnecessary journeys are laid aside: if business, call us forth, we go, because we must; as for the visits of friendship, one sun is enough to measure them, with our returns. And still, the older we grow, the more we are devoted to our home: there we are content to sit still, and enjoy the thoughts of our youth and former experience; not looking farther, than a kind neighbourhood. But, when age hath stiffened our joints, and disabled our motions, now, our home-pastures and our gardens become our utmost boundaries. From thence, a few years more confine us to our own floor. Soon after that, we are limited to our chamber; and, at last, to our chair; then, to our bed; and, in fine, to our coffin. These natural restrictions, O my soul, are the appendances of thy weary partner, this earthly body; but, for thee, the nearer thou drawest to thy home, the more it concerns thee to be sensible of a blessed enlargement of thy estate and affections. Hitherto, thou art immured in a strait pile of clay: now, heaven itself shall be but wide enough for thee. The world hath hitherto taken thee up, which, though large, is yet but finite: now, thou art upon the enjoying of that God, who alone is infinite, in all that he is. Oh, how inconsiderable is the restraint of the worse part, in comparison of the absolute enlargement of the better! O my God, whose mercy knows no other limits than thy essence, work me, in this shutting up of my days, to all heavenly dispositions; that, while my outward man is so much more lessened, as it draws nearer to the centre of its corruption, my spiritual part may be so much more dilated in and towards thee, as it approacheth nearer towards the circumference of thy celestial glory.

LXXII.

SIN WITHOUT SENSE.

Alas, Lord, how tenderly sensible I am of the least bodily complaint, that can befal me! If but a tooth begin to ache, or a thorn have rankled in my flesh, or but an angry corn vex my toe, how am I incessantly troubled with the pain! how feelingly do I bemoan myself! how carefully do I seek for a speedy remedy! which till I feel, how little relish do I find in my wonted contentment! But, for the better part, which is so much more tender as it is more precious, with what patience, shall I call it, or stupidity, do I endure it wounded, were it not for thy great mercy, no less than mortally! Every new sin, how little soever, that I commit, fetches blood of the soul: every willing sin stabs it: the continuance wherein festers inwardly; and, without repentance, kills. O God, I desire to be ashamed and humbled under thy hand, for this so unjust partiality; which gives me just cause to fear, that sense hath yet more pre-

dominance in me, than faith. I do not so much sue to thee, to make me less sensible of bodily evils, whereof yet too deep a sense differs little from impatience; as to make me more sensible of spiritual: let me feel my sin more painful, than the worst disease; and, rather than wilfully sin, let me die.

LXXIII.

THE EXTREMES OF DEVOTION.

I ACKNOWLEDGE it to be none of thy least mercies, O God, that thou hast vouchsafed to keep me within the due lines of devotion; not suffering me to wander into those two extremes, which I see and pity in others. Too many there are, that do so content themselves in meer formalities, that they little regard how their heart is affected with the matter of their prayers: so have I grieved to see poor mis-devout souls under the papacy, measuring their orisons, not by weight, but by number; not caring which way their eye strayed, so their lips went; resting well apaid that God understood them, though they understood not themselves: too near approaching whereunto, are a world of well-meaning ignorant souls at home, that care only to pray by rote, not without some general intentions of piety, but so, as their hearts are little guilty of the motion of their tongues; who, while they would cloak their carelessness with a pretence of disability of expressing their wants to God, might learn, that true sense of need never wanted words to crave relief: every beggar can, with sufficient eloquence, importune the passenger for his alms: did they not rather lack a heart than a tongue, they could not be defective in bemoaning themselves to heaven for what they lack; especially, while we have to do with such a God, as more esteems broken clauses made up with hearty sighs, than all the compliments of the most curious eloquence in the world. On the other side, there are certain zealous devotionists, which abhor all set forms and fixed hours of invocation, teaching, and so practising, that they may not pray, but when they feel a strong impulsion of God's Spirit to that holy work; whereupon it hath come to pass, that whole days, yea weeks, have gone over their heads, unblessed by their prayers: who might have taken notice, that, under the Law, God had his regular course of constant hours for his morning and evening sacrifices; that the ancient saints, under the Old Testament, held close to David's rule, *evening, and morning, and at noon* to pray and cry aloud; Psalm lv. 17: so as the very lions could not fright Daniel from his task: and, even after the vail of the Temple was rent, Peter and John went up together to God's house, at the ninth hour, to Evening Prayer; Acts iii. 1: yea, what stand ye upon this; when the Apostle of the Gentiles charges us, To pray continually? 1 Thess. v. 17. Not that we should, in the midst of a sensible indisposedness of heart, fall suddenly into a fashionable devotion; but, that, by holy ejaculations and previous meditation, we should make way for a feeling invocation of our God, whose ears are never but open to our faithful

prayers. If we first, though silently, pray that we may pray, the fervour of our devotion shall grow upon us, in praying: these holy waters of the Sanctuary, that, at first, did but wet the soles of our feet, shall, in their happy process, rise up to our chins. I thank thee, O God, that thou hast given me a desire to walk even between these extremities. As I would be ever in a praying disposition to thee, so I would not willingly break hours with thee: I would neither sleep nor wake, without praying; but I would never pray, without feeling. If my heart go not along with forms of words, I do not pray, but babble; and, if that be bent upon the matter of my suit, it is all one to thee, whether the words be my own, or borrowed. Let thy Good Spirit ever teach me to pray, and help me in praying: let that ever *make intercessions for me, with groanings which cannot be expressed;* Rom. viii. 26: and, then, if thou canst, send me away empty.

LXXIV.

THE SICK MAN'S VOWS.

The answer was not amiss, which Theodoricus, Bishop of Coleine, is said to have given to Sigismond the Emperor; who, demanding how he might be directed the right way to heaven, received answer; "If thou walk so, as thou promisedst in thy painful fit of the stone or gout *." Our extremities commonly render us holy; and our pain is prodigal of those vows, which our ease is as niggardly in performing. The distressed mariner, in the peril of a tempest, vows to his Saint a taper, as big as the mast of his ship; which, upon his coming to shore, is shrunk into a rush candle. There was never a more stiff-necked people, than that, which should have been God's peculiar; yet, upon every new plague, how do they crouch and creep to the power, which their murmurs provoked! And we daily see desperation makes those votaries, whom health dispenseth with, as the loosest of libertines. Were it essential to prosperity, thus to pervert and debauch us, it were enough to make a good heart out of love with welfare; since the pleasure and profit of the best estate is far too short of recompensing the mischief of a depraved jollity; but now, the fault is in our own wretched indisposition: the blessing is God's; the abuse is ours. Is the sun to be blamed, that the traveller's cloak swelts him with heat? Is the fruit of the grape guilty of that drunkenness, which follows upon a sinful excess? Can we not feed on good meat, without a surfeit? And, whose fault is it, but ours, if we forget the engagements of our sick beds? Rather than health should make us godless, how much better were it for us to be always sick? O my God, I do acknowledge and bewail this wretched frailty of our corrupt nature: we are not the same men, sick and whole: we are apt to promise thee fair, and to pay thee with disappointment; and are ready to put off our holy thoughts, with our biggins. It is

* Æneas Sylv. de Reb. gest. Alph.

thou only, that canst remedy this sickness of our health, by working us to a constant mortification. Oh, do thou ever bless thy servant, either with sanctified crosses, or a temperate prosperity.

LXXV.

THE SUGGESTIONS OF A FALSE HEART.

SURELY, if thousands of souls perish by the flattery of others, more perish by their own; while their natural self-love soothes them with plausible, but untrue suggestions, concerning their estate. Is the question concerning grace? The false heart tells a man, he is stored to superfluity and excess; when he is, indeed, more bare and beggarly, than the proud pastor of Laodicea. Is the question of sin? It proclaims him, not innocent only, but a Saint: it tells him his hands are pure, when he is up to the elbows in blood; that his tongue is holy, when it is foul with perjury and blasphemy; that his eye is honest and chaste, when it is full of adultery; that his soul is clean, when it is defiled with abominable lusts, or with cruel rancour and malice. Is the question concerning virtue? It tells a man he is just, when he is all made up of rapine, and violent oppression; that he is eminently wise, when he hath not wit enough to know himself a fool; that he is free-handed and munificent, when he sticks not to rob beggars; that he is piously religious, while he pulls down churches. Thus is the man still hid from himself; and is made to see another, in his own skin: he cannot repent, because he thinks himself faultless: he cannot amend, because he is ever at the best: his only ease and advantage is, that he is carried hoodwinked into hell. If the question be concerning some scrupulous act to be done or omitted, now self-respect plays its prizes at all weapons: what shifting and traversing there is, to avoid the dint of a present danger! what fine colours and witty equivocations doth the soul find out, to cozen itself into a safe offence! If the question be of a sinful act already committed, what a shuffling there is, to face it out by a stout justification! maugre conscience, it was not lawful only; but, such as the circumstances were, expedient also: and, if it be so foul, that an apology is too odious, yet an extenuation cannot but be admitted: be it amiss, yet, not heinous, not unmeet for pardon. One would think hell should have little need of the fawning assentation of others, when men carry so dangerous parasites in their own bosoms: but, sure, both together must needs help to people that region of darkness. Take heed, O my soul, how thou givest way to these flattering thoughts, whether arising from thy own breast, or injected by others; and know, thou art never in more danger, than when thou art most applauded. Look upon thine estate and actions with unpartial and severe eyes. Behold thine own face, not in the false glass of opinion and mercenary adulation, but in the true and perfect glass of the Royal Law of thy Creator: that shall duly represent unto thee, whether the beauty of thy graces, or the blemishes of thy manifold imperfections: that alone shall tell thee, how much

thou art advanced in a gracious proficiency, and how shamefully defective thou art in what thou oughtedst to have attained. Judge of thyself, by that unfailing rule; and be indifferent, what thou art judged of, by others.

LXXVI.

SACRED MELODY.

WHAT a marvellously cheerful service was that, O God, which thou required and hadst performed, under the Law! Here was not a dumb and silent act in thy sacrifices, a beast bleeding before thy altar, and a smoke, and flame arising out of it: here was not a cloudy perfume, quietly ascending from the golden altar of thine incense: but, here was the merry noise of most melodious music, singing of psalms, and sounding of all harmonious instruments. The congregation were upon their knees, the Levites upon their stage sweetly singing, the priests sounding the trumpets, together with cymbals, harps, psalteries, making up one sound in praising and thanking the Lord; 2 Chron. xxix. 25—28. 2 Chron. v. 12, 13. Methinks, I hear, and am ravished to hear, in some of thy solemn days, a hundred and twenty of thy priests sounding with trumpets: thy Levites, in greater number, singing aloud with the mixture of their musical instruments: so as, not the Temple only, but the Heaven rings again. And, even in thy daily sacrifices, each morning and evening, I find a heavenly mirth: music, if not so loud, yet no less sweet and delicate; no fewer than twelve Levites might be standing upon the stage, every day, singing a divine ditty over thy sacrifice; psalteries, not fewer than two, nor more than six; pipes, not fewer than two, nor more than twelve; trumpets two at the least, and but one cymbal *: so proportioned by the masters of thy choir; as those, that meant to take the heart through the ear. I find, where thy holy servants, David, Solomon, Hezekiah, (doubtless by thy gracious direction, yea, by thy direct command; 2 Chron. xxix. 25—28.) both appointed, and made use of these melodious services: I do not find, where thou hast forbidden them: this I am sure of, since thou art still and ever the same, under both Law and Gospel, that thou both requirest and delightest in the cheerful devotions of thy servants. If we have not the same sounds with thy Legal worshippers, yet we should still have the same affections. As they might not wait upon thee, sorrowful; so, it is not for us to praise thee, with drooping and dejected spirits. O God, do thou quicken my spiritual dulness in thy holy service; and, when I come to celebrate thy great Name, while the song is in my mouth, let my heart be the stage, wherein trumpets, and psalteries, and harps shall sound forth thy praise.

LXXVII.

BLEMISHES OF THE HOLY FUNCTION.

I CANNOT but bless myself, at the sight of that strange kind of curiosity, which is reported to have been used in the choice of those,

* Maimonides in Cle hamikdash. c. 3.

who were of old admitted to serve at the altar. If Levi must be singled out from all Israel, yet thousands must be refused of the Tribe of Levi. We are told *, that, notwithstanding that privilege of blood, no less than a hundred and forty blemishes might exclude a man from this sacred ministration; whereof nineteen in the eyes, nine in the ears, twenty in the feet. Such a holy niceness there was in the election of the legal priesthood, that, if there were not found an exact symmetry of all parts of the body, and not comeliness only, but a perfection of outward form in those Levitical candidates, they might by no means be allowed to serve in the Sanctuary: they might have place in some out-rooms, and cleave wood for the altar, and might claim a portion in the holy things; but they might not meddle with the sacred utensils, nor set foot upon the floor of the holy place. It was thy charge, O God, that those sons of Aaron, which drew near to thee, should be void of blemish: thou, which wouldest have the beasts of thy sacrifice free from bodily imperfection, wouldest much more have thy sacrificers so. The generality of the command was thine: the particularities of the numbers are traditional. And well might the care of these outward observations agree with the pedagogy of that Law, which consisted in external rites; but we well know, it was the inward purity of the heart, and integrity of an unspotted life, that thou meantest to aim at, under the figure of these bodily perfections; which, if it were wanting, it was not a skin-deep beauty and exquisiteness of shape, that could give a son of Aaron an allowed access to thine altar. Hophni and Phinehas, the ill sons of good Eli, were outwardly blemishless, else they had not been capable of so holy an attendance; but their insolencies and beastliness made them more loathsome to thee, than if they had been lepers or monsters of outward deformity. And can we think that thou hast less regard to the purity of the Evangelical Ministry, than thou formerly hadst of the Legal? Can we think the spiritual blemishes of thine immediate servants under the Gospel, can be a less eyesore to thee, than the external blemishes of thy Priesthood under the Law? *Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eye a fountain of tears, that I might weep night and day*, for the enormities of those, who profess to wait on thy Evangelical Sanctuary! Jer. ix. 1. My sorrow and piety cannot but bewail them to thee, though my charity forbids me to blazon them to the world. O thou, that art as *the refiner's fire* and *the fuller's soap*, do thou *purify all the sons of* thy spiritual *Levi*: do thou *purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering of righteousness: then shall the offerings of our Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant to the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years*; Mal. iii. 2, 4.

LXXVIII.

THE BLESSED REWARD.

When Paulinus came first into this island, to preach the Gospel, to our then-pagan ancestors, King Edwin thought good to consult

* Maimon. in Biath hamikdash.

with his priests and nobles, whether it were best to give any entertainment to the Christian religion; which was, by that stranger, preached and recommended to his people *. Up starts one Coifi, the arch-priest of those Heathen Idols, and freely says: "There is no virtue or goodness, O King, in this religion, which we have hitherto embraced: there is none of all thy subjects, that hath more studiously addicted himself to the service and worship of our gods, than myself; yet, I am sure, there are many, that have prospered better, and have received more favours from thee, than I have done: and, if our gods could do any thing, they would rather have been beneficent to me, that have most carefully served them: it remains then, if these new doctrines which are preached to us, be found upon examination to be better and more available, that, without all delay, we do readily receive and welcome them." Thus spake a true Idol's Priest, that knew no ell, whereby to measure religion, but profit; no proof of a just cause, but success; no conviction of injustice, but miscarriage. Yea, even thine altars, O Righteous God, were never quit of some such mercenary attendants, who seek for only gain in godliness: if the Queen of Heaven afford them better penny-worths, and more plenty than the King of Heaven, she shall have their cakes, and their incense, and their hearts to boot; Jer. xliv. 17, 18. I know thee, O Lord, to be a munificent rewarder of all that serve thee; yet, if thou shouldest give me no wages, I will serve thee; if thou shouldest pay me with hunger, and stripes, and prisons, and death, I will serve thee. Away base thoughts of earthly remuneration: I will honour and serve thee, O God, for thine own sake, for thy service's sake; yet I have no reason not to regard thine infinite bounty: it is no less than a crown, that thou hast promised me; and that I shall humbly aspire unto, and expect from thee, not as in the way of my merit, but of thy mere mercy. My service is free, in a zealous and absolute consecration to thee: thy hand is more free, in my so gracious retribution. If thou be pleased to give thy servant such a weight of glory, the glory of that gift is thine. My service is out of my just duty: thy reward is of thy grace, and divine beneficence. Do thou give me to do what thou biddest me, and then deal with me as thou wilt. As the glory of thy Name is the drift of all my actions; so the glory, that thou givest me, cannot but redound to the glory of thine infinite mercy. Blessed be thy Name, in what thou givest; while thou makest me blessed, in what I receive from thee.

LXXIX.

PRESAGES OF JUDGMENT.

SELDOM ever do we read of any great mutation in Church or State, which is not ushered in with some strange prodigies: either, raining of blood; or, apparitions of comets; or, airy armies fighting in the clouds; or, sea monsters appearing; or, monstrous births

* Beda Eccles. Hist. l. ii. cap. 13.

of men or beasts; or, bloody springs breaking out; or, direful noises heard; or, some such like uncouth premonitors; which the Great and Holy God sends purposely to awaken our security, and to prepare us either for expectation or prevention of judgments: wherein, the mercy of God marvellously magnifies itself towards sinful mankind, that he wills not to surprise us with unwarned evils, but would have his punishments anticipated by a seasonable repentance. But, of all the fore-tokens of thy fearfullest plagues prepared for any nation, O God, there is none so certain, as the prodigious sins of the people committed with a high hand against heaven, against so clear a light, so powerful convictions. The monstrous and unmatchable heresies, the hellish blasphemies, the brutish incests, the savage murders, the horrible sacrileges, perjuries, sorceries of any people, can be no other than the professed harbingers of vengeance: these are our showers of blood: these are our ill-boding comets: these are our misshapen births; which an easy augury might well construe, to portend our threatened destruction. The Prophet did not more certainly foretell, when he heard of a hand-broad cloud arising from the sea, that a vehement rain was coming, (1 Kings xviii. 44:) than God's Seers might foreknow, when they saw this dark cloud of our sins mounting up towards heaven, that a tempest of judgment must necessarily follow. But, O thou God of infinite mercy and compassion, *look down from heaven* upon us, *and behold* us *from the habitation of thy holiness: where is thy zeal, and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels, and of thy mercies towards* us? *Are they restrained?* Isaiah lxiii. 15. If so, it is but just; for, surely, we are *a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity;* Isaiah i. 4. We have seen our tokens, and have felt thy hand; yet we have not turned to thee from our evil ways: *to us,* therefore, justly *belongeth confusion of faces, because we have sinned against thee:* but to thee, O Lord our God, *belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against* thee; Dan. ix. 8, 9. Oh, spare, spare the remnant of thy people: *let thine anger and thy fury be turned away* from thy chosen inheritance. *O my God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate;* vv. 16, 17. *O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken, and defer not for thine own sake, O my God;* v. 19.

LXXX.

UNWEARIED MOTION, AND REST ETERNAL.

I SEE thy heavens, O God, move about continually, and are never weary of their revolution: whereas, all sublunary creatures are soon tired with motions; and seek for ease, in their intermissions. Even so, O my soul, the nearer thou growest to celestial, the more constant shall thy courses be; and the freer from that lassitude, that hangs upon thine earthly part. As it is now with me; thou seest, I soon find an unavoidable defatigation in all things: I am weary of labour; and, when that is done, I am no less weary of doing nothing; weary of the day, and more weary of the night;

weary of all postures, weary of all places; weary of any one, if never so pleasing, employment; weary, even of varieties; weary of those, which some men call recreations; weary of those, wherein I find most delight, my studies. But, O my soul, if thou be once soundly heavenized in thy thoughts and affections, it shall be otherwise with thee: then, thou shalt be ever, like this firmament, most happily restless: thou shalt then find ever work enough, to contemplate that Infinite Deity, who *dwells in the light inaccessible;* to see, with ravishment of spirit, thy Dear Saviour in his glorified Humanity, adored by all the powers of heaven; to view the blessed Orders of that Celestial Hierarchy, attending upon the Throne of Majesty; to behold and admire the unspeakable and incomprehensible glory of the Saints: these are objects, with the sight whereof thine eye shall never be satisfied, much less cloyed; besides, that the hopes and desires of enjoying so great felicity, and the care of so composing thyself as that thou mayest be ever readily addressed for the fruition of it, shall wholly take thee up, with such contentment, that all earthly pleasures shall be no better than torments in comparison thereof. Oh, then, my soul, since, as a spark of that heavenly fire, thou canst never be but in motion, fix here above, where thy movings can be no other than pleasing and beatifical. And as thou, O my God, hast a double heaven; a lower heaven for motion, and an empyreal heaven for rest; one patent to the eye, the other visible to our faith; so let my soul take part with them both: let it ever be moving towards thee, and in thee, like this visible heaven; and, since the end of all motion is rest, let it ever rest with thee, in that invisible region of glory. So let it move ever to thee, while I am here, that it may ever rest with thee, in thine eternal glory hereafter!

THE

SOUL'S FAREWELL TO EARTH,

AND

APPROACHES TO HEAVEN.

BY JOSEPH, BISHOP OF NORWICH.

THE SOUL'S FAREWELL TO EARTH,

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APPROACHES TO HEAVEN.

SECT. I.

BE thou ever, O my soul, holily ambitious: always aspiring towards thy heaven; not entertaining any thought, that makes not towards blessedness. For this cause, therefore, put thyself upon thy wings, and leave the earth below thee; and, when thou art advanced above this inferior world, look down upon this globe of wretched mortality, and despise what thou wast and hadst: and think with thyself: "There was I, not a sojourner, so much as prisoner, for some tedious years: there have I been, thus long tugging with my miseries, with my sins: there have my treacherous senses betrayed me to infinite evils, both done and suffered. How have I been there tormented, with the sense of others' wickedness, but more of my own! what insolence did I see in men of power! what rage, in men of blood! what gross superstition, in the ignorant! what abominable sacrilege, in those, that would be zealous! what drunken revellings, what Sodomitical filthiness, what hellish profanations, in atheous ruffians! what perfidiousness in friendship, what cozenage in contracts, what cruelty in revenges! shortly, what a hell upon earth! Farewell then, sinful world, whose favours have been no other than snares, and whose frowns no less than torments: farewell, for ever: for, if my flesh cannot yet clear itself of thee, yet my spirit shall ever know thee at a distance; and behold thee, no otherwise than the escaped mariner looks back upon the rock, whereon he was lately splitted. Let thy bewitched clients adore thee for a Deity: all the homage thou shalt receive from me shall be no other, than defiance; and, if thy glorious shews have deluded the eyes of credulous spectators, I know thee for an impostor: deceive, henceforth, those, that trust thee; for me, I am out of the reach of thy fraud, out of the power of thy malice."

Thus do thou, O my soul, when thou art raised up to this height of thy fixed contemplation, cast down thine eyes contemptuously upon the region of thy former miseries, and be sure ever to keep up in a constant ascent towards blessedness; not suffering thyself to stoop any more upon these earthly vanities.

For, tell me seriously, when the world was disposed to court thee most of all, what did it yield thee but unsound joys, sauced

with a deep anguish of spirit; false hopes, shutting up in a heart-breaking disappointment; windy proffers, mocking thee with sudden retractions; bitter pills, in sugar; poison, in a golden cup? It shewed thee, perhaps, stately palaces, but stuffed with cares; fair and populous cities, but full of toil and tumult; flourishing churches, but annoyed with schism and sacrilege; rich treasures, but kept by ill spirits; pleasing beauties, but baited with temptation; glorious titles, but surcharged with pride; goodly semblances, with rotten insides; in short, Death, disguised with pleasures and profits.

If, therefore, heretofore thy unexperience have suffered thy feathers to be belimed with these earthly entanglements; yet, now, that thou hast happily cast those plumes and quit thyself of these miserable incumbrances, thou mayest soar aloft above the sphere of mortality, and be still towering up towards thy heaven: and, as those, that have ascended to the top of some Athos or Teneriff, see all things below them, in the valleys, small, and scarce, in their diminution, discernible; so shall all earthly objects, in thy spiritual exaltation, seem unto thee: either, thou shalt not see them at all; or, at least so lessened, as that they have to thee quite lost all the proportion of their former dimensions.

SECT. II.

It will not be long, O my soul, ere thou shalt absolutely leave the world, in the place of thy habitation; being carried up, by the blessed angels, to thy rest and glory: but, in the mean time, thou must resolve to leave it, in thy thoughts and affections. Thou mayest have power over these, even before the hour of thy separation; and these, rightly disposed, have power to exempt thee, beforehand, from the interest of this inferior world, and to advance thine approaches to that world of the blessed. While thou art confined to this clay, there is naturally a luggage of carnality, that hangs heavy upon thee, and sways thee down to the earth; not suffering thee to mount upward to that bliss, whereunto thou aspirest: this must be shaken off, if thou wouldest attain to any capacity of happiness: even in this sense, *Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.* It behoves thee to be, so far as this composition will admit, spiritualized; ere thou canst hope to attain to any degree of blessedness.

Thy conjunction with the body doth necessarily clog thee with an irrational part, which will unavoidably force upon thee some operations of its own; and thy senses will be interposing themselves in all thy intellectual employments, proffering thee the service of their guidance in all thy proceedings: but, if thou lovest eternity of blessedness, shake them off as importunate suitors; gather up thyself into thy own regenerated powers, and do thy work without and above them. It is enough, that thou hast, at first, taken some hint from them, of what concerns thee: as for the rest, cast them off as unnecessary and impertinent; the prosecution whereof is too high and too internal, for them to intermeddle with. Thou hast now

divine and heavenly things in chase, whereof there cannot be the least scent in any of these earthly faculties. Divest thyself, therefore, what thou possibly mayest, of all materiality, both of objects and apprehensions; and let thy pure, renewed, and illuminated intellect work only upon matter spiritual and celestial.

And, above all, propose unto thyself and dwell upon that purest, perfectest, simplest, blessedest object, the Glorious and Incomprehensible Deity: there, thou shalt find more than enough, to take up thy thoughts to all eternity. Be thou, O my soul, ever swallowed up in the consideration of that Infinite Self-being Essence, whom all created spirits are not capable sufficiently to admire. Behold, and never cease wondering at, the Majesty of his Glory. The bodily eyes dazzle at the sight of the sun; but, if there were as many suns as there are stars in the firmament of heaven, their united splendor were but darkness to their All-glorious Creator. Thou canst not yet hope to see him, as he is: but, lo, thou beholdest where he dwells, in light inaccessible; the sight of whose very outward verge, is enough to put thee into a perpetual ecstasy. It is not for thee, as yet, to strive to enter within the vail: thine eyes may not be free, where the angels hide their faces. What thou wantest in sight, O my soul, supply in wonder. Never any mortal man, O God, durst sue to see thy face, save that one entire servant of thine, whose face thy conference had made shining and radiant; but even he, though inured to thy presence, was not capable to behold such glory, and live. Far be it from me, O Lord, to presume so high. Only let me see thee as thou hast bidden me; and but so, as not to behold thee, after thy gracious revelation, were my sin. Let me see, even in this distance, some glimmering of thy divine Power, Wisdom, Justice, Mercy, Truth, Providence; and let me bless and adore thee, in what I see.

SECT. III.

Oh, the infiniteness of thine Almighty Power, which thou not hast, but art, beyond the possibility of all limitations of objects or thoughts. In us, poor finite creatures, our power comes short of our will: many things we fain would do, but cannot; and great pity it were, that there should not be such a restraint upon our unruly appetites, which would otherwise work out the destruction both of others and ourselves. But, O God, thy power is beyond thy will: thou canst do more than thou wilt: thou couldest have made more worlds, when thou madest this one; and even this one, which thou hast made, Lord, how glorious a one it is! Lo, there needs no other demonstration of thine Omnipotence.

Oh, what a heaven is this, which thou hast canopied over our heads! how immensely capacious! how admirably beautiful! how bestudded with goodly globes of light! some one whereof hath in it such unspeakable glory, as that there have not wanted nations, and those not of the savagest, which have mis-worshipped it for their God: and, if thou hadst made but one of these in thy firmament, thy workmanship had been above our wonder; for even

this had surpassed the whole frame of this lower world. But now, as their Quality strives with their Greatness, so their magnitude strives with their Number, which of them shall more magnify the praise of their Almighty Creator: and these three are no less than matched, by the constant Regularity of the perpetual motion of those mighty bodies; which having walked their daily rounds about the world above this five thousand six hundred and sixty years, yet are so ordered by thy inviolable decree, that they have not varied one inch from their appointed line, but keep their due course and just distance each from other; although not fixed in any solid orb, but moving singly in a thin and yielding sky, to the very same point whence they set forth.

And, if the bodily and visible part of thy heavenly host, O God, be thus unconceivably glorious, where shall we find room to wonder at those spiritual and living powers, which inhabit those celestial mansions, and attend upon the Throne of thy Majesty; the thousand thousands of thy blessed Angels, Archangels, Cherubim, Seraphim, Thrones, Principalities, Dominions, which in thy presence enjoy a bliss next to infinite; any one of which, if we could see him, were enough to kill us with his glory? Not one of those millions of mighty spirits, but were able to destroy a world. Oh, then, how infinitely transcendent is that power of thine, which hast both created all this heavenly Hierarchy; and so movest in them, that only in and by thee they are thus potent!

Yea, Lord, let me but cast mine eyes down to this earth I tread upon, and view thy wonders in the deep, how manifestly do these proclaim thy divine Omnipotence! When I see this vast globe of earth and waters, dreadfully hanging in the midst of a liquid air, upheld by nothing but by thy powerful word; when I see the rage of the swelling waves, naturally higher than the shores they beat upon, restrained to their bounds by thine over-ruling command; when I see the earth beautifully garnished with marvellous variety of trees, herbs, flowers, richly stuffed with precious metals, stones, minerals; when I see, besides a world of men, the numberless choice and differences of the substance, forms, colours, dispositions, of beasts, fowls, fishes, wherewith these lower elements are peopled; how can I be but dissolved into wonder of thine almighty power?

SECT. IV.

Neither is thy power, O God, either more, or more thyself, than thy Wisdom; which is no less essential to thee, than infinite. What have we to do, silly and shallow wretches, with that incomprehensible wisdom, which is intrinsical to thy Divine Nature? The body of that sun is not for our weak eyes to behold: it is enough for me, if I can but see some rays of that heavenly light, which shines forth so gloriously upon thy creature; in the framing and governing whereof, whether thy power or wisdom did and do more exhibit itself, thou only canst judge.

Oh, the divine architecture of this goodly fabric of heaven and

earth, raised out of nothing to this admirable perfection! what stupendous artifice of composition is here! what exquisite symmetry of parts! what exact order of degrees! what marvellous analogy betwixt beasts, fishes, plants, the natives of both elements!

Oh, what a comprehensive reach is this of thine omniscience; which, at once, in one act, beholdest all the actions and events of all the creatures, that were, are, or shall be in this large universe! What a contrivance of thine eternal counsel, which hast most wisely and holily ordered how to dispose of every creature thou hast made, according to the pleasure of thy most just will! What a sway of Providence is this, that governs the world: over-ruling the highest, and stooping to the meanest piece, of thy creation; concurring with and actuating the motions and operations of all second causes of whatsoever is done in heaven or in earth!

Yea, Lord, how wonderful are those irradiations of knowledge and wisdom, which thou hast beamed forth upon thine intelligent creatures, both angels and men! As for those celestial spirits, which see thy face continually, it is no marvel if they be illuminated in a degree far above human apprehension: but, that the rational soul of man, even in this woeful pilgrimage below, notwithstanding the opacity of that earth wherewith it is encompassed, should be so far enlightened, as that it is able to know all the motions of the heavens, the magnitudes and distances of stars, the natures, properties, influences of the planets, the instant of the eclipses, conjunctions, and several aspects of those celestial bodies; that it can discover the secret treasures of earth and sea; and knows how to unlock all the close cabinets both of art and nature: O God, what is this, but some little gleam of that pure and glorious light, which breaks forth from thine infiniteness upon thy creature?

Yet, were the knowledge of all men on earth, and all the angels in heaven, multiplied a thousand fold, how unable were it, being united together, to reach unto the height of thy divine counsels; to fathom the bottom of thy most wise and holy decrees! so as they must be forced to cry out, with that Saint of thine, who was rapt into the third heaven, *Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!* Rom. xi. 33.

SECT. V.

But with what a trembling adoration, O my soul, must thou needs look upon the infinite Justice of thy God; whose inviolable rule is to render to every man according to his works! Alas, the little good, thou wert able to do, hath been allayed with so many and great imperfections, that it can expect no retribution but displeasure: and, for the many evils whereof thou art guilty, what canst thou look for but the wages of sin, death? not temporary, and natural only, which is but a separation of thee, awhile, from thy load of earth; but the spiritual and eternal separation from the presence of thy God, whose very want is the height of torments. Lo, whatever become of thee, God must be himself. In vain shouldst thou hope, that for thyself he will abate ought of his blessed essence, of the sa-

cred attributes. That righteous doom must stand, *The soul, that sins, shall die.* Hell claims his due: justice must be satisfied: where art thou now, O my soul? what canst thou now make account of, but to despair and die? surely, in thyself, thou art lost: there is no way with thee, but utter perdition.

But look up, O my soul, look up *above the hills, whence cometh thy salvation:* see the heavens opening upon thee: see what reviving and comfortable rays of Grace and Mercy shine forth unto thee, from that excellent glory; and, out of that heavenly light, hear the voice of thy Blessed Saviour, saying to thee, *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help;* Hos. xiii. 9. Even so, O Jesu, in thee, only in thee, is my help. Wretched man that I am, in myself I stand utterly forfeited to death and hell: it is thou, that hast redeemed me, with no less ransom, than thy precious blood. Death was owing by me; by thee it was paid for me: so as now, my debt is fully discharged, and my soul clearly acquitted. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God, that justifieth: who is he that condemneth? It is Christ, that died; yea, rather that is risen again;* Rom. viii. 33, 34. Lo now, the rigour of thine inviolable justice is taken off, by thine infinite mercy: the sum, that I could never pay, is, by the power of that faith which thou hast wrought in me, set off to my all-sufficient Surety; and, by thy divine goodness, graciously accepted as mine: I have paid it in him; he hath paid it for me. Thy justice is satisfied; thy debtor freed; and thy mercy magnified.

SECT. VI.

THERE are no bounds to be set unto thy thoughts, O my soul: since, whatsoever thy God either is, or hath done, comes within thy prospect. There, besides the great work of his creation, thou mayest dwell upon the no less almighty work of his administration, of this universal world; whereof the preservation and government is no less wonderful than the frame: there, thou shalt see the marvellous subordination of creatures, some made to rule, others to obey; the powerful influence of the celestial bodies upon the inferior; the continual transmutation of elements, forsaking their own places and natures to serve the whole; forms dying, matter perpetual; all things maintained by a friendly discord of humours, out of which they are raised; the circular revolution of fashions, occurrents, events; the different and opposite dispositions of men, overruled to such a temper, that yet government is continued in the hands of few, society and commerce with all; shortly, all creatures, while they do either naturally or voluntarily act their own part, doing unawares the will of their Creator.

But, that, which may justly challenge thy longer stay and greater wonder, is the more-than-transcendent work of man's redemption; the mysteries whereof the holy angels have desired to look into; 1 Pet. i. 12. but could never yet sufficiently conceive or admire. That the Son of God, the Lord of Glory, Coeternal, Cocqual to his Father, *God blessed for ever,* should take upon him an estate lower than their own: should clothe his Deity, with the rags of our flesh:

should stoop to weak and miserable manhood: and, in that low and despicable condition, should submit himself to hunger, thirst, weariness, temptation of devils, despite of men; to the cruelty of tormenters; to agonies of soul; to the pangs of a bitter, ignominious, cursed death; to the sense of his Father's wrath for us, wretched sinners, that had made ourselves the worst of creatures, enemies to God, slaves to Satan: is above the reach of all finite apprehension. O never-to-be-enough-magnified mercy *! Thou didst not, O Saviour, when thou sawest mankind utterly lost and forlorn, content thyself to send down one of thy Cherubim or Seraphin, or some other of thy heavenly Angels, to undertake the great work of our deliverance; as well knowing that task too high for any created power: but wouldest, out of thine infinite love and compassion, vouchsafe, so to abase thy blessed self, as to descend from the throne of thy celestial glory to this dungeon of earth; and, not leaving what thou hadst and what thou wast, to assume what thou hadst not, man; and to disparage thyself by being one of us, that we might become like unto thee, co-heirs of thy glory and blessedness. Thou, that art the Eternal Son of God, wouldest condescend so low, as to be man; that we, who are worms and no men, might be advanced to be the sons of God: thou wouldest be a servant, that we might reign: thou wouldest expose thyself to the shame and disgrace of thy vile creatures here, that thou mightest raise us up to the height of heavenly honour, with thee our God and thy holy angels: thou wouldest die for a while, that we might live eternally.

Pause here awhile, O my soul, and do not wish to change thy thoughts: neither earth nor heaven can yield thee any of higher concernment, of greater comfort: only, withal, behold the glorious person, of that thy blessed Mediator, after his victories over death and hell, sitting triumphant in all the Majesty of Heaven, adored by all those millions of celestial spirits, in his glorified Humanity; and, what thou mayest, enjoy the vision of him by faith, till thou shalt be everlastingly blessed with a clear and present intuition. Long after that day; and be ever careful, in the mean time, to make thyself ready for so infinite a happiness.

SECT. VII.

And now, O my soul, having left below thee all the trivial vanities of earth; and fixed thyself, so far as thy weak eyes will allow thee, upon thy God and Saviour, in his almighty works and most glorious attributes; it will be time for thee, and will not a little conduce to thy further address towards blessedness, to fasten thyself upon the sight of the happy estate of the Saints above, who are gone before thee to their bliss; and have, through God's mercy, comfortably obtained that, which thou aspirest unto. Thou, that wert guided by their example, be likewise heartened by their success: thou art yet a traveller; they, comprehensors: thou art pant-

* Bernard. Serm. de passione Domini.

ing towards that rest, which they most happily enjoy: thou art sweating under the cross, while they sit crowned in a heavenly magnificence.

See the place wherein they are, the heaven of heavens, the paradise of God; infinitely resplendent, infinitely delectable: such as no eye can behold, and not be blessed. Shouldst thou set thy tabernacle in the midst of the sun, thou couldst not but be encompassed with marvellous light: yet, even there, it would be but as midnight with thee, in comparison of those irradiations of glory, which shine forth above, in that Imperial Region; for thy God is the sun there; Rev. xxi. 23: by how much, therefore, those divine rays of his exceed the brightest beams of his creature; so much doth the beauty of that heaven of the blessed, surpass the created light of this inferior and starry firmament. Even the very place contributes not a little to our joy or misery. It is hard to be merry in a gaol: and the great Persian monarch thought it very improper for a courtier, to be of a sad countenance within the verge of so great a royalty; Neh. ii. 2. The very devils conceive horror, at the apprehension of the place of their torment; and can beseech the over-ruling power of thy Saviour, not to command them to go out into the deep; Luke viii. 31. No man can be so insensate, to think there can be more dreadfulness in the place of those infernal tortures, than there is pleasure and joy in the height of that sphere of blessedness; since we know we have to do with a God, that delights more in the prosperity of his saints, than in the cruciation and howling of his enemies. How canst thou then, O my soul, be but wholly taken up with the sight of that celestial Jerusalem, the beauteous city of thy God, the blessed mansions of glorified spirits! Surely, if earth could have yielded any thing more fair and estimable than gold, pearls, precious stones, it should have been borrowed to resemble these supernal habitations; but, alas, the lustre of these base materials doth but darken the resplendence of those divine excellencies. With what contempt now, dost thou look down upon those muddy foundations of earth, which the low spirits of worldlings are wont to admire! and how feelingly dost thou bless and emulate the spirits of just men made perfect, who are honoured with so blissful a habitation! Heb. xii. 23.

But what were the place, O my soul, how goodly and glorious soever in itself, if it were not for the presence of him, whose being there makes it heaven? Lo there the throne of that Heavenly Majesty, which, filling and comprehending the large circumference of this whole, both lower and superior world; yet there, keeps and manifests his state, with the infinite magnificence of the King of Eternal Glory. There, he, in an ineffectible manner, communicates himself to blessed spirits, both angels and men: and that very vision is no less to them, than beatifical. Surely, were the place a thousand degrees lower in beauty and perfection than it is, yet that presence would render it celestial: the residence of the king was wont to turn the meanest village or castle into a court. The sweet singer of Israel saw this, of old; and could say, *In thy presence is the fulness of joy; and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.*

It is not so, in these earthly and finite excellencies. A man may see mountains of treasure, and be never a whit the richer; and may be the witness and agent too in another's honour, as Haman was of Mordecai's, and be so much more miserable; or, may view the pomp and splendor of mighty princes, and be yet still a beggar: but the infinite graces of that Heavenly King are so communicative, that no man can see him, but must be transformed into the likeness of his glory.

SECT. VIII.

Even thy weak and imperfect vision of such heavenly objects, O my soul, are enough to lay a foundation of thy blessedness: and how can there choose but be raised thence, as a further degree towards it, a sweet complacency of heart, in an appropriation of what thou seest; without which, nothing can make thee happy? Let the sun shine never so bright, what is this to thee, if thou be blind? Be the God of Heaven never so glorious, yet if he be not thy God; be the Saviour of the World never so merciful, yet if he be not merciful to thee; be the heaven never so full of beauty and majesty, yet if thou have not thy portion in that inheritance of the saints in light; so far will it be from yielding thee comfort, that it will make a further addition to thy torment. What an aggravation of misery shall it be to those, that were children of the kingdom, that, from that utter darkness whereinto they are cast, they shall see aliens *come from the east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven!* Matth. viii. 11. Cease not then, O my soul, till, by a sure and undefeasible application, thou hast brought all these home to thyself; and canst look upon the great God of Heaven, the gracious Redeemer of the World, the glory of that celestial paradise, as thine own. Let it be thy bold ambition and holy curiosity, to find thy name enrolled in that eternal register of heaven: and, if there be any one room in the many mansions of that celestial Jerusalem, lower and less resplendent than other, thither do thou find thyself, through the great mercy of thy God, happily designed. It must be the work of thy faith, that must do it: that divine grace it is, the power whereof can either fetch down heaven to thee, or carry thee beforehand up to thy heaven; and not affix thee only to thy God and Saviour, but unite thee to him, and, which is yet more, ascertain thee of so blessed an union.

Neither can it be, but that, from this sense of appropriation, there must necessarily follow a marvellous contentment and complacency, in the assurance of so happy an interest. Lord, how do I see poor worldlings please themselves, in the conceit of their miserable proprieties! One thinks, "Is not this my great Babylon, which I have built?" Dan. iv. 30. Another, "Are not these my rich mines?" Another, "Is not this my royal and adored magnificence?" And how are those unstable minds transported, with the opinion of these great, but indeed worthless, peculiarities; which, after some little time, moulder with them into dust! How

canst thou then be but pleasingly affected, O my soul, with the comfortable sense of having a God, a Saviour, and Heaven of thine own! For, in these spiritual and heavenly felicities, our right is not partial and divided, as it useth to be in secular inheritances; so as that every one hath his share distinguished from the rest, and parcelled out of the whole: but here, each one hath all; and this blessed patrimony is communicated to all saints, as that the whole is the propriety of every one.

Upon the assurance, therefore, of thy God's gracious promises made to every true believer, find thou thyself happily seized of both the King and Kingdom of Heaven, so far as thy faith can as yet feoff thee in both; and delight thyself, above all things, in these unfailing pledges of thine instant blessedness; and say, with the holy Mother of thy Redeemer, *My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour;* Luke i. 46, 47.

SECT. IX.

From this feeling complacency, in the owning of thy right to glory and happiness, there cannot but arise a longing desire of the full possession thereof: for thou canst not so little love thyself, as what thou knowest thou hast a just title unto, and withal apprehendest to be infinitely pleasing and beneficial, not to wish that thou mayest freely enjoy it. If thou have tasted how sweet the Lord is, thou canst not but long for more of him; yea, for all.

It is no otherwise, even in carnal delights; the degustation whereof is wont to draw on the heart to a more eager appetition: much more, in spiritual; the pleasures whereof, as they are more pure, so they are of the heavenly-minded with far greater ardency of spirit affected. The covetous man's heart is in his bags: what he hath, doth but augment his lust of more; and the having of more, doth not satiate, but enlarge his desires. *He, that loveth silver, shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he, that loveth abundance, with increase;* Eccl. v. 10: but these celestial riches are so much more allective, as they are more excellent, than those, which are delved out of the bowels of the earth.

O my soul, thou hast, through the favour of thy God, sipped some little of the cup of immortality; and tasted of that heavenly manna, the food of angels: and canst thou take up with these slight touches of blessedness? Thou hast, though most unworthy, the honour to be contracted so thy Saviour, here below: thou knowest the voice of his spouse, *Draw me, and we shall run after thee. Stay me with flagons; comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love. Make haste, my Beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices;* Cant. i. 4: ii. 5: viii. 14. Where is thy love, if thou have not fervent desires of a perpetual enjoyment? if thou do not earnestly wish for a full consummation of that heavenly match?

O my Lord and Saviour, as I am not worthy to love thee, so I were not able to love thee, how amiable soever, but by thee. O thou, that hast begun to kindle this fire of heavenly love in me,

raise thou it up to a perfect flame: make me not only sick of thy love, but ready and desirous to die for thee, that I may enjoy thee. Oh, let me not endure, that any worldly heart should be more enamoured of these earthly beauties, which are but varnished rottenness; than I am of thee, who art of absolute and infinite perfections, and bestowest them in being loved. Oh, when shall the day be, wherein thou wilt make up these blessed nuptials; and endow me with a full participation of that glory, wherewith thou art invested, from and to all eternity? whereto have all thy sweet favours and gracious love-tokens tended, but to this issue of blessedness? Oh, do thou crown all thy mercies in me, and me with immortality.

SECT. X.

Upon this desire of fruition, if thou wouldst be truly happy, there must follow a constant prosecution of that desire: for, if thy wishes be never so fervent, yet if they be only volatile and transient, they shall be able to avail thee little: slight and flickering motions of good, if they be not followed with due endeavours, sort to no effect.

Content not thyself, therefore, O my soul, that thou hast entertained into thyself some affective thoughts of thy beatitude; but settle thyself in firm resolutions to pursue and perpetuate them: let them not call in as strangers, but dwell in thee as inmates; never to be, by any secular occasions, dislodged. These morning dews of holy dispositions, which are ready to be exhaled with every gleam of worldly prosperity, as they find little acceptance from God, so they are able to afford small comfort to thee; as whose condition is such, that they leave thee more disconsolate in their vanishing, than they yielded thee pleasure in their momentary continuance. Be thou able to say with holy David, *My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed;* and then thou mayst well add, *I will sing and give praise;* Psalm lvii. 7: otherwise, thy distracted thoughts will admit no cause of sound joy.

In this case it falls out with thee, O my soul, as with some fond child, who, eagerly following a bee in hope of her bag, sees a gay butterfly cross his way; and thereupon leaves his first chase, and runs after those painted wings: but, in that pursuit, seeing a bird fly close by him, he leaves the fly, in hope of a better purchase: but, in the mean time, is disappointed of all, and catcheth nothing. It mainly behoves thee therefore, to keep up thy cogitations and affections, close to these heavenly objects; and to check them, whensoever thou perceivest an inclination to their wandering: like as the careful huntsman, when he finds his hound offering to follow after a new game, rates him off, and holds him to his first scent.

Whither are ye straying, O my thoughts? What means this sinful and lossful inconstancy? Can ye be happier in a change? Is there any thing in this miserable world, that can be worthy to carry you away from the hopes and affectations of blessedness?

Have ye not full often complained of the worthlessness and satiety of these poor vanities, here below? Have ye not found their promises false, their performances unsatisfactory, their disappointment irksome? Away then, ye frivolous temptations; and solicit those minds, that are low and empty, like yourselves: for me, I disdain your motions; and, being taken up with higher employments, scorn to descend to your base suggestions, which tend to nothing but mere earthliness.

But, as there is no fire which will not go out if it be not fed, it cannot be enough, that thou hast entertained these gracious resolutions; unless thou do also supply and nourish them, with holy meditations, devout prayers, continual ejaculations, and the due frequentation of all the holy ordinances of thy God: without which, if they shall languish through thy neglect, thou shalt find double more work and difficulty, in reviving them; than there could have been, in maintaining and upholding them in their former vigour. Be not, therefore, wanting to thyself, in the perpetual exercise and improvement of all those holy means, that may further and perfect these heavenly longings after salvation: thy God shall not be wanting to thee, in blessing thee with an answerable success.

SECT. XI.

It is the just praise of the marvellous bounty of thy God, O my soul, that *he will fulfil the desires of them, that fear him;* Psalm cxlv. 19. If, therefore, thou canst hunger and thirst after righteousness, if thy heart can yearn after heaven, he shall be sure to satisfy thee with goodness: and not only shall bring thee home, at the last, to that land of promised blessedness; but, in the mean time also, put thee into an inchoate fruition of happiness; which is the next degree of thine ascent to heaven.

That, which is complete, may be the surest rule of knowing and judging, of that, which is imperfect. Wherein doth the perfection of heavenly bliss consist, but in a perpetual enjoying the presence of God, in a clear vision of the Divine Essence, in a perfect union with God, and an eternal participation of his life and glory? Now, as grace is glory begun, and glory is grace consummate, so dost thou, O my soul, being wrought to it by the power of the Spirit of thy God, even in this life, how weakly soever, enter upon all these acts and privileges of beatitude: even here below, thou art never out of the presence of thy God; and that presence can never be other than glorious; and that it is not beatifical here, is not out of any deficiency in it, but in thine own miserable incapacity, who, while thou abidest in this vale of tears, and art clogged with this flesh, art no fit subject of so happy a condition.

Yea, that blessed presence is ever comfortably acknowledged by thee, and enjoyed with such contentment and pleasure, that thou wouldst not part with it for a world, and that thou justly accountest all earthly delights but mere vexations to that alone: *Whom have I in heaven, but thee? and what do I desire on earth, in comparison of thee?* Psalm lxxiii. 25. Balaam could say, how

truly soever, *I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh;* Num. xxiv. 17: but, Lord, I see thee even now: I behold thee so nigh me, that I live in thee; and would rather die, than live without thee. I see thee, though weakly and dimly, yet truly and really: I see thee, as my God All-sufficient, as my powerful Creator, my merciful Redeemer, my gracious Comforter: I see thee the Living God, the Father of Lights, the God of Spirits; dwelling in light inaccessible; animating, filling, comprehending this glorious world; and do awfully adore thine infiniteness.

Neither do I look at thee, with a trembling astonishment, as some dreadful stranger or terrible avenger; but I behold thy Majesty so graciously complying with my wretchedness, that thou admittest me to a blessed union with thee. I take thee at thy word, O Dear Saviour, even that sweet word of impetration, which thou wert pleased to utter to thy Co-eternal Father, immediately before thy meritorious passion: *I pray not for these alone, but for them also, which shall believe on me through their word: that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they may be one in us. And the glory, which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one: and that the world may know, that thou hast sent me; and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me;* John xvii. 20—23. I know thou couldest not but be heard, in all that thou prayedst; and, therefore, I take what thou suedst for, as done. Lord, I do believe in thee: unite thou me to thee: make me one spirit with thee; 1 Cor. vi. 17. It is no presumption, to sue and hope for what thou hast prayed for, and promised to perform. Oh, make me, according to the capability of my weak humanity, partaker of thy Divine Nature; 2 Peter i. 4. Vouchsafe to allow me, even me, poor wretched soul, to say of thee, *I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine;* Cant. vi. 3.

And, by virtue of this indissoluble union, why shouldest thou not, O my soul, find thyself endowed with a blessed participation of that heavenly life and glory, which is in and with him? In that thou art united to thy body, thou impartest to it vegetation, sense, motion; and givest it a share in the exercise of all thy noble faculties: how much more entire and beneficial is the spiritual union of thy God and thee! Alas, that bond of natural conjunction is easily dissolved, by ten thousand ways of death: this heavenly knot is so fast tied, that all the powers of hell cannot unloose it. And the blessings communicated to thee by this Divine match are so much more excellent, as the Infinite Giver of them is above thy meanness. Lo, now thou art actually interested in all that thy God is, or hath: his kingdom is thine, his glory is thine, to all eternity.

SECT. XII.

And what now can follow, O my soul, upon the apprehension of thus enjoying the presence of thy God, and the vision of so blessed an object, and thine union with him and participation of him; but a sensible ravishment of spirit, with a *joy unspeakable*

and full of glory? Heretofore, if some great friend should have brought me to the court, and, having shewed me the splendour and magnificence of that seat of majesty, should have brought me into the sight of his royal person; and should have procured me, not only a familiar conference with him, but the entire affection of a favourite; and from thence there should have been heaped upon me titles of honour and large revenues, and, yet higher, a consociation of princely dignity; how should I have been transported with the sense of so eminent an advancement! how great and happy should I have seemed, not more in others' eyes, than in my own! what big thoughts had hereupon swollen up my heart, in the days of my vanity!

But, alas, what poor things are these, in comparison of those heavenly promotions! I might have been brought into the stateliest court of this world; and have been honoured, not only with the presence, but the highest favours of the best and greatest of kings; and yet have been most miserable. Yea, which of those monarchs, that have the command and dispensation of all greatness, can secure himself from the saddest infelicities? But these spiritual prerogatives are above the reach of all possible miseries, and can and do put thee, in some degree, into an unfailing possession, both real and personal, of eternal blessedness.

I cannot wonder that Peter, when, with the other two disciples upon mount Tabor, he saw the glorious Transfiguration of my Saviour, was out of himself for the time, and knew not what he said; yet, as not thinking himself and his partners, any other ways concerned, than in the sight of so heavenly a vision, he mentions only three tabernacles, for Christ, Moses, Elias, none for themselves; Mark ix. 6. Luke ix. 33. It was enough for him, if, without doors, he might be still blessed with such a prospect: but how had he been rapt from himself, if he had found himself taken into the society of this wondrous transformation, and interested in the communion of this glory!

Thy renovation, and the power of thy faith, O my soul, puts thee into that happy condition: thou art spiritually transfigured into the similitude of thy Blessed Saviour, shining with his righteousness and holiness; Rom. xii. 2. Eph. iv. 24: so as he is glorified in thee, and thou in him; John xvii. 10. 2 Thes. i. 12: glorified, not in the fulness of that perfection, which will be; but in the pledge and earnest, of what shall and must be, hereafter.

Oh, then, with what unspeakable joy and jubilation, dost thou entertain thy happiness! How canst thou contain thyself any longer within these bounds of my flesh, when thou feelest thyself thus initiated into glory? Art thou in heaven, and knowest it not? knowest thou not, that he, who is within the entry or behind the screen, is as truly within the house; as he, that walks in the hall, or sits in the parlour? and canst thou pretend to be within the verge of heaven, and not rejoice? What is it, that makes heaven, but joy and felicity? thy very thought cannot separate these two, no more than it can sever the sun and light: for both these are

equally the originals and fountains of light and joy; from whence they both flow, and in which both are complete. There is no light, which is not derived from the sun; no true joy, but from heaven: as, therefore, the nearer to the body of the sun, the more light and heat; so, the nearer to heaven, the more excess of joy. And certainly, O my soul, there is nothing, but infidelity, can keep thee from an exuberance of joy and delight, in the apprehension of heaven.

Can the weary traveller, after he hath measured many tedious miles, and passed many dangers both by sea and land, and felt the harsh entertainments of a stranger, chuse but rejoice to draw near, in his return, to a rich and pleasant home? Can the ward, after a hard pupillage, chuse but rejoice that the day is coming, wherein he shall freely enjoy all his lordly revenues and royalties? Can a Joseph chuse but find himself inwardly joyed, when, out of the dungeon, he shall be called up, not to liberty only, but to honour; and shall be arrayed with a vesture of fine linen, and graced with Pharaoh's ring and chain, and set in his second chariot, and in the next chair to the throne of Egypt? And canst thou apprehend thyself now approaching to the glory of the heaven of heavens, a place and state of so infinite contentment and happiness, and not be ecstasied with joy?

There, there shalt thou, O my soul, enjoy a perfect rest from all thy toils, cares, fears: there shalt thou find a true vital life, free from all the incumbrances of thy miserable pilgrimage; free from the dangers of either sins or temptations; free from all anxiety and distraction; free from all sorrow, pain, perturbation; free from all the possibility of change or death: a life, wherein there is nothing, but pure and perfect pleasure; nothing, but perpetual melody of angels and saints, singing sweet Hallelujahs to their God: a life, which the most glorious Deity both gives, and is: a life, wherein thou hast the full fruition of the ever-blessed Godhead, the continual society of the celestial spirits, the blissful presence of the glorified Humanity of thy Dear Saviour: a life, wherein thou hast ever consort with the glorious company of the apostles, the goodly fellowship of the patriarchs and prophets, the noble army of martyrs and confessors, the celestial synod of all the holy fathers and illuminated doctors of the Church; shortly, the blessed assembly of all the faithful professors of the Name of the Lord Jesus, that, having finished their course, sit now shining in their promised glory. See there that yet-unapproachable light, that divine magnificence of the Heavenly King: see that resplendent crown of righteousness, which decks the heads of every of those saints; and is ready to be set on thine, when thou hast happily overcome those spiritual powers, wherewith thou art still conflicting: see the joyful triumphs of these exulting victors: see the measures of their glory different, yet all full, and the least unmeasurable: lastly, see all this happiness not limited to thousands, nor yet millions of years, but commeasured by no less than eternity.

And now, my soul, if thou have received the infallible engage-

ment of thy God, in that, having believed, thou art sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of thine inheritance, until the full redemption of thy purchased possession; Eph. i. 13, 14: if, through his infinite mercy, thou be now upon the entering into that blessed place and state of immortality: forbear, if thou canst, to be raised above thyself with *the joy of the Holy Ghost:* 1 Thes. i. 6: to be enlarged towards thy God, with a joy unspeakable and glorious. See, if thou canst now breathe forth any thing, but praises to thy God, and songs of rejoicing: bearing evermore a part in that heavenly ditty of the angels; *Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might be unto our God, for ever and ever;* Rev. vii. 12.

SECT. XIII.

And now what remains, O my soul, but that thou do humbly and faithfully wait at the gate of heaven, for a happy entrance, at the good pleasure of thy God, into those everlasting mansions?

I confess, should thy merits be weighed in the balance of a rigorous justice, another place, which I cannot mention without horror, were more fit for thee, more due to thee: for, alas, thou hast been, above measure, sinful; and thou knowest the wages of sin, death. But *the God of my mercy hath prevented* thee, with infinite compassion; Psalm lix. 10: and, in the multitudes of his tender mercies, hath not only *delivered* thee *from the nethermost hell;* Psalm lxxxvi. 13: but hath also vouchsafed to *translate* thee *to the kingdom of his Dear Son;* Col. i. 13. In him, thou hast boldness of access to the Throne of Grace: thou, who, in thyself, art worthy to be a child of wrath, art, in him, adopted to be a co-heir of glory; and hast the livery and seizin given thee, beforehand, of a blessed possession; the full estating wherein, I do, in all humble awfulness, attend.

All the few days, therefore, of my appointed time, will I wait at the threshold of grace, until my changing come; with a trembling joy, with a longing patience, with a comfortable hope.

Only, Lord, I know there is something to be done, ere I can enter: I must die, ere I can be capable to enjoy that blessed life with thee: one stroke of thine angel must be endured, in my passage into thy paradise. And, lo, here I am before thee, ready to embrace the condition: even, when thou pleasest, let me bleed once to be ever happy. Thou hast, after a weary walk through this roaring wilderness, vouchsafed to call up thy servant to mount Nebo; and, from thence, aloof off, to shew me the Land of Promise, a land that flows with milk and honey. Do thou but say, "Die thou on this hill," with this prospect in mine eye; and do thou mercifully take my soul from me, who gavest it to me; and dispose of it where thou wilt, in that region of immortality. Amen, Amen. Come, Lord Jesu, come quickly.

Behold, Lord, I have, by thy providence, dwelt in this house of clay more than double the time, wherein thou wert pleased to sojourn upon earth: yet, I may well say, with thy holy Patriarch,

Few and evil have been the days of the years of my pilgrimage; Gen. xlvii. 9: few, in number; evil, in condition.

Few, in themselves; but none at all to thee, with whom *a thousand years are but as one day.* But, had they been double to the age of Methuselah, could they have been so much as one minute to eternity? Yea, what were they to me, now that they are past, but as a tale that is told and forgotten?

Neither yet have they been so few, as evil. Lord, what troubles and sorrows hast thou let me see, both my own and others! what vicissitudes of sickness and health! what ebbs and flows of condition! how many successions and changes of princes, both at home and abroad! what turnings of times! what alteration of governments! what shiftings and downfals of favourites! what ruins and desolations of kingdoms! what sacking of cities! what havocks of war! what frenzies of rebellions! what underminings of treachery! what cruelties and barbarisms in revenges! what anguish in the oppressed and tormented! what agonies in temptations! what pangs in dying! These I have seen; and, in these, I have suffered. And now, Lord, how willing I am to change time, for eternity; the evils of earth, for the joys of heaven; misery, for happiness; a dying life, for immortality!

Even so, Lord Jesu: take what thou hast bought: receive my soul to thy mercy; and crown it with thy glory: Amen, Amen, Amen.

THE

GREAT MYSTERY OF GODLINESS,

LAID FORTH

BY WAY OF AFFECTUOUS AND FEELING

MEDITATION.

BY JOSEPH, BISHOP OF NORWICH

To all them, that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, Grace and Peace.

DEAR BRETHREN:

If I have, in a sort, taken my leave of the world already; yet not of you, whom God hath chosen out of the world, and endeared to me by a closer interest: so as ye may justly expect from me a more special valediction; which I do now, in all Christian affection, tender unto you. And, as dear friends, upon a long parting, are wont to leave behind them some tokens of remembrance, where they most affect; so have I thought good, before my setting forth on my last journey, to recommend unto you these my Two Final Meditations: than which, I suppose, nothing could be more proper for me to give, or more like to merit your acceptation; for, if we were half way in heaven already, what can be a more seasonable employment of our thoughts, than the Great Mystery of Godliness, which the angels desire to look into? And now, when our bodily eyes are glutted with the view of the things that are seen, a prospect which can afford us nothing but vanity and vexation, what can be more meet, than to feed our spiritual eyes with the Light of Invisible Glories? Make your use of them: both to the edifying of yourselves, in your most holy faith; and aspire with me, towards that happiness, which is laid up above for all those, that love the appearance of our Lord Jesus. Withal, as the last words of friends are wont to bear the greatest weight, and to make the deepest impression; so let these lines of holy advice, wherewith, after many well-meant discourses, I shall close up the mouth of the press, find the like respect from you.

Oh, that I might, in the first place, effectually recommend to you the full recovery of that precious legacy of our Blessed Saviour, Peace: peace with God, peace with men; next to Grace, the best of all blessings: yet, woe is me, too too long banished from the Christian world, with such animosity, as if it were the worst of enemies, and meet to be adjudged to a perpetual migration! Oh, for a fountain of tears, to bewail the slain of God's people, in all the coasts of the earth! How is Christendom become an universal Aceldama! How is the earth every where drenched with human blood; poured out, not by the hands of cruel infidels, but of brethren! Men need not go so far as Euphrates, for the execution of Turks and Pagans: Christians can make up an Armageddon, with their own mutual slaughter. Enough, my Dear Brethren, enough; yea, more than too much, hath been the effusion of that blood, for which our Saviour hath shed his. Let us now, at the last, dry up these deadly issues, which we have made; and, with sovereign balms, bind up the wounds we have given. Let us now be, not more sparing of our tears, to wash off the memory of these our un-

brotherly dimications; and to appease the anger of that God, whose offended justice hath raised war out of our own bowels. As our enmity, so our peace, begins at heaven: had we not provoked our long-suffering God, we had not thus bled; and we cannot but know and believe him that said, *When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh his enemies to be at peace with him;* Prov. xvi. 7. Oh, that we could throughly reconcile ourselves to that Great and Holy God, whom we have irritated by our crying sins: how soon would he, who is the commander of all hearts, make up our breaches, and calm and compose our spirits to a happy peace and concord!

In the next place, give me leave earnestly to exhort you, that, as we have been heretofore palpably faulty in abusing the mercies of our God, for which we have soundly smarted; so that now, we should be so much the more careful to improve the judgments of God, to our effectual reformation. We have felt the heavy hand of the Almighty upon us to purpose: oh, that our amendment could be no less sensible than our sufferings! But, alas, my Brethren, are our ways any whit holier; our obedience more exact, our sins less and fewer, than before we were thus heavily afflicted? May not our God too justly take up that complaint, which he made once by his Prophet Jeremiah, *Ye have transgressed against me, saith the Lord: In vain have I smitten your children, they received no correction?* Jer. ii. 29, 30. Far be it from us, that, after so many sad and solemn mournings of our land, any accuser should be able to charge us, as the Prophet Hosea did his Israel, *By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood;* Hos. iv. 2. Woe be to us, if, after so many veins opened, the blood remaining should not be the purer!

Let me have leave, in the third place, to excite you to the practice of Christian charity, in the mutual constructions of each others' persons and actions; which, I must tell you, we have heedlessly violated, in the heat of our holy intentions: while those, which have varied from us in matter of opinion, concerning some appendances of religion and outward forms of administration, we have been apt to look upon with such disregard, as if they had herein forfeited their Christian profession, and were utter aliens from the commonwealth of Israel; though, in the mean time, sound at the heart, and endeavouring to walk close with God in all their ways: whereas the Father of all Mercies allows a gracious latitude to his children, in all not-forbidden paths; and in every nation and condition of men, *he, that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him;* Acts x. 35. Beware we, my Dear Brethren, lest, while we follow the chase of zeal, we outrun charity; without which, piety itself would be but unwelcome. As for matter of opinion in the differences of religion, wherewith the whole known world, not of Christians only, but of men, is woefully distracted, to the great prejudice of millions of souls, let this be our sure rule, "Whosoever he be, that holds *the faith, which was once delivered to the saints,* (Jude 3.) agreeing therefore with us in all fundamental

truths, let him be received as a brother:" for there is but *one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;* and *other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* 1 Cor. iii. 11. Let those, which will be a devising a new creed, look for a new Saviour, and hope for another heaven: for us, we know whom we have believed. If any man be faulty in the doctrines of superstructure, let us pity and rectify his error, but not abandon his person. The Communion of Saints is not so slight, that it should be violated by weak mistakings. If any man, through ignorance or simplicity, shall strike at the foundation of faith, let us labour, by all gentle means and brotherly conviction, in the spirit of meekness, to reclaim him: if, after all powerful endeavours, he will needs remain obstinate in his evil way; let us disclaim his fellowship, and not think him worthy of a God-speed. But, if he shall not only wilfully undermine the ground-work of Christian Faith, by his own damnable opinions, but diffuse his heretical blasphemies to the infection of others; let him be cut off by spiritual censures; and so dealt with, by public authority, that the mischief of his contagion may be seasonably prevented, and himself be made sensible of his heinous crime. In all which proceedings, just distinction must be made, betwixt the seduced soul, and the pestilent seducer: the one calls for compassion; the other, for severity. So then, my Brethren, let us pity and pray for all, that have erred and are deceived: let us instruct the ignorant, convince the gainsaying, avoid the obstinate, restrain the infectious, and punish the self-convicted heresiarch.

In the fourth place, let us, I beseech you, take heed of being swayed with self-interests in all our designs. These have ever been the bane of the best undertakings, as being not more plausibly insinuative, than pernicious: for that partial self-love, that naturally lodges in every man's breast, is ready to put us upon those projects, which, under fair pretences, may be extremely prejudicial to the public weal; suggesting, not how lawful or expedient they may be for the common, but how beneficial to ourselves; drawing us, by insensible degrees, to sacrifice the public welfare to our own advantage, and to underwork and cross the better counsels of more faithful patriots: whereupon, many flourishing Churches, Kingdoms, States, have been brought to miserable ruin. Oh, that we could remember, that, as all things are ours, so we are not our own: that we have the least interest in ourselves; being infinitely more considerable as parts of a community, than as single persons: that the main end of our being, next to the glory of our Maker, is an universal serviceableness to others; in the attaining whereof, we shall far more eminently advance our own happiness, than by the best of our private self-seeking endeavours. But, withal, it will be meet for us to consider, that, as we are made to serve all, so only in our own station: there can be no hope of a continued well-being, without order: there can be no order, without a due subordination of degrees, and diversity of vocations: and, in vain shall divers vocations be ordained, if all professions shall interfere with each other. It is the prudent and holy charge of the Apostle, *Let every man*

abide in the same calling wherein he is called; 1 Cor. vii. 20. We are all members of the same body; every one whereof hath his proper employment: the head is to direct and govern; the feet, to walk; the eyes, to see; the ears, to hear. How mad would we think that man, that should affect to walk on his head; to hear, with his eye; to see, with his ear! Neither, surely, is it less incongruous for men, in Divine and Civil Administrations, to offer to undertake and manage each others' functions, in their nature and quality no less desperate. So then, let us endeavour to advance the common good, as that a pious zeal may not draw in confusion; and that we may not mistakingly rear up the walls of Babel, while we intend Jerusalem. Not religion only, but policy calls us to encouragement of all useful professions; and, of the sacred so much more, as the soul is more precious than all the world beside. Heed, therefore, must be taken, to avoid all means, whereby the study of learning and knowledge may be any way disheartened; as, without which, the world would soon be over-run with ignorance and barbarism. All arts, therefore, as being in their kind excellent, may justly challenge their own rights, and, if they shall want those respects, which are due to them, will suddenly languish. But, above all, as Divinity is the queen of sciences, so should it be our just shame, that, while her handmaids are mounted on horseback, she should wait on them on foot.

Fifthly, as it is our greatest honour, that the Name of Christ is called upon us; so let it, I beseech you, be our care, that our profession be not formal, empty, and barren, like the Jewish fig-tree, abounding with leaves, void of fruit; but real, active, fruitful of all good works, and exemplary in an universal obedience to the whole will of God: for it is a scandal never to be enough lamented, that any of those who are Saints by calling, (such we all are, or should be) should hug some darling sin in their bosom, which at last breaks forth to the shame of the Gospel, and to the insultation of Gath and Ascalon. Woe be to us, if we shall thus cause the name of our God to be evil spoken of! There are too many of those, whom I am loth and sorry to style Heathen-Christians; Christians in name, Heathens in conversation: these, as they come not within the compass of my Dedication, (for, alas, how should they love the Lord Jesus, when they know him not?) so I can heartily bewail their condition, who, like Gideon's fleece, continue altogether dry, under so many sweet showers of grace; wishing unto their souls, even thus late, a sense of the efficacy of that water, which was once poured on their faces. These, if they run into all excess of riot, what can be other expected from them? but, for us, that have learned to know the Great Mystery of Godliness, and have given up our name to a strict covenant of obedience, if we shall suffer ourselves to be miscarried into any enormous wickedness, we shall cause heaven to blush, and hell to triumph. Oh, therefore, let us be so much the more watchful over our ways, as our engagements to the name of our God are greater, and the danger of our miscarriages more deadly.

Lastly, let me beseech and adjure you, in the Name of the Lord Jesus, to be careful in matter of religion; to keep within the due bounds of God's revealed will: a charge, which I would to God were not too needful in these last days; wherein, who sees not what spirits of error are gone forth into the world, for the seducing of simple and ungrounded souls? Woe is me, what throngs are carried to hell by these devilish impostors! One pretends visions, and revelations of new verities, which the world was not hitherto worthy to know: another boasts of new lights of uncouth interpretations, hidden from all former eyes. One despises the dead letter of the Scriptures: another distorts it to his own erroneous sense. Oh, the prodigies of damnable, heretical, atheous fancies, which have hereupon infested the Christian Church; for which, what good soul doth not mourn in secret? the danger whereof ye shall happily avoid, if ye shall keep close to the written word of our God, which is only able to make you wise to salvation. As our Saviour repelled the Devil, so do ye the fanatic spirits of these brain-sick men, with, *It is written:* Let those, who would be wiser than God, justly perish in their presumption. My soul for yours, if ye keep you to St. Paul's guard, *not to be wise above that which is written.* I could easily, out of the exuberance of my Christian love, overcharge you with multiplicity of holy counsels; but I would not take a tedious farewell. May the God of Heaven bless these, and all other wholesome admonitions, to the furtherance of your souls in grace: and may his Good Spirit ever lead and guide us in all such ways, as may be pleasing to him, till we happily meet in the participation of that incomprehensible glory, which he hath prepared for all his Saints. Till when, Farewell; from your fellow pilgrim in this vale of tears,

JOSEPH HALL.

THE

GREAT MYSTERY OF GODLINESS.

SECT. I.

1 Tim. iii. 16. *Great is the mystery of godliness—*

LET no man go about to entertain the thoughts of the *Great Mystery of Godliness*, but with a ravished heart; a heart filled with a gracious composition of love, and joy, and wonder: such a one, O Saviour, I desire, through thy grace, to bring with me to the meditation of that thine infinitely glorious work of our redemption.

It was as possible for thy Chosen Vessel, who was, by a divine ecstasy, caught up into paradise, and there heard unutterable words, to express what he saw and heard above, as to set forth what was acted by thee here below: as, therefore, unable either to comprehend or utter things so far above wonder, he contents himself with a pathetical intimation of that, which he saw could never be enough admired: *Great is the Mystery of Godliness.*

There are great mysteries of art, which the wit and experience of skilful men have discovered: there are greater mysteries of nature, some part whereof have been described by art and industry; but the greater part lies hidden from mortal eyes: but these are less than nothing, to the *Great Mystery of Godliness.* For, what are these, but the deep secrets of the creature? mean, therefore, and finite, like itself: but the other are the unfathomable depths of an Infinite Deity; fitter for the admiration of the highest angels of heaven, than for the reach of human conception.

Great were the mysteries of the Law; neither could the face of Moses be seen without his veil: but what other were these, but the shadows of this *Great Mystery of Godliness?* What did that golden ark overspread with glorious cherubims, that gorgeous temple, those perfumed altars, those bleeding sacrifices, that sumptuous priesthood, but prefigure thee, O Blessed Saviour, which, in the fulness of time, shouldest be revealed to the world, and make up this *Great Mystery of Godliness?*

There is nothing, O Dear Jesu, that thou either didst or sufferedst for mankind, which is other than mysterious and wonderful: but the great and astonishing Mystery of Godliness is thyself, *God manifested in the flesh.* Lo, faith itself can never be capable to apprehend a mystery like this. Thou, who art a spirit, and therefore immaterial, invisible, to expose thyself to the view of earthen eyes: thou, who art an infinite spirit, to be enwrapped in flesh:

thou, an all-glorious eternal spirit, to put on the rags of human mortality: thou, the great creator of all things, to become a creature: thou, the Omnipotent God, to subject thyself to miserable frailty and infirmity: O mystery, transcending the full apprehension of even glorified souls! If but one of thy celestial spirits have, upon thy gracious mission, assumed a visible shape, and therein appeared to any of thy servants of old; it hath been held a spectacle of so dreadful astonishment, that it could not be consistent with life: even so much honour was thought no less than deadly: neither could the patient make any other account, than to be killed with the kindness of that glory: what shall we say then, that thou, who art the God of those spirits, and therefore infinitely more glorious than all the hierarchy of heaven, vouchsafedst, not in a vanishing apparition, but in a settled state of many years' continuance, to shew thyself in our flesh, and to converse with men in their own shape and condition? O *Great Mystery of Godliness, God manifested in the flesh:* so great, that the holy ambition of the heavenly angels could not reach higher, than the desire to look down into it; 1 Pet. i. 12.

SECT. II.

BUT, O Saviour, that, which raised the amazement at the appearance of thine angels, was their resplendent glory; whereas, that, which heightens the wonder of thy manifestation to men, is the depth of thine abasement. Although thou wouldest not take the nature of angels; yet, why wouldest thou not appear in the lustre and majesty of those thy best creatures? Or, since thou wouldest be a man, why wouldest thou not come as the chief of men; commanding kings and princes of the earth to attend thy train? Thou, whose the earth is and the fulness thereof, why wouldest thou not raise to thyself a palace comprised of all those precious stones, which lie hid in the close coffers of that thine inferior treasury? Why did not thy court glitter with pearl and gold, in the rich furnitures and gay suits of thy stately followers? why was not thy table furnished, with all the delicacies, that the world could afford? O Saviour, it was the great glory of thy mercy, that, being upon earth, thou wouldest abandon all earthly glory: there could not be so great an exaltation of thy love to mankind, as that thou wouldest be thus low abased. *Manifested* then thou wert, but manifested in a despicable obscurity: whether shall I more wonder, that, being *God blessed for ever*, thou wouldest become man; or, that, condescending to be man, thou wouldest take upon thee the shape of a servant; a servant to those, whose Lord, whose God thou wert? —*God manifested,*

What proportion could there be, O Blessed Jesu, betwixt a God and a Man; betwixt finite and infinite? The only power of thy everlasting and unmeasurable love hath so reduced one of these to the other, that both are united in that glorious person of thine, to make up an absolute Saviour of Mankind. O the height and depth of this super-celestial mystery; that the Infinite Deity and finite flesh should meet in one subject! yet —*in the flesh*—

so, as the Humanity should not be absorbed of the Godhead, nor the Godhead coarcted by the Humanity; but both inseparably united: that the Godhead is not Humanized, the Humanity is not Deified; both are indivisibly conjoined; conjoined so, as without confusion distinguished. So wert thou, O God, *manifested in the flesh*, that thou, the Word of thine Eternal Father, wert *made flesh; and dwelledst amongst us; and we* men *beheld thy glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth;* John i. 14. Yet, so wert thou made flesh, as not by conversion into flesh, but as by assumption of flesh to thine Eternal Deity; assumption, not into the nature of the Godhead, but into the person of thee who art God everlasting. O Mystery of Godliness, incomprehensibly glorious! Cease, cease, O human curiosity; and, where thou canst not comprehend, wonder and adore.

SECT. III.

But, O Saviour, was it not enough for thee to be *manifested in flesh?* Did not that elementary composition carry in it abasement enough, without any further addition? since, for God to become man, was more, than for all things to be redacted to nothing: but that, in the rank of miserable manhood, thou wouldest humble thyself to the lowest of Humanity, and become a servant? Shall I say more? I can hear Bildad, the Shuhite, say, *Man is a worm;* Job xxv. 6: and I hear him, who was a noble type of thee, say, as in thy person, *I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of all the people;* Psalm xxii. 6. O Saviour, in how despicable a condition do I find thee exhibited to the world! lodged in a stable; cradled in a manger; visited by poor shepherds; employed in a homely trade; attended by mean fishermen; tempted by presumptuous devils; persecuted by the malice of envious men; exposed to hunger, thirst, nakedness, weariness, contempt! How many slaves, under the vassalage of an enemy, fare better than thou didst, from ingrateful man, whom thou camest to save! Yet, all these were but a mild and gentle preface to those thy last sufferings, wherewith thou wert pleased to shut up this scene of mortality: there I find thee, sweating blood in thine agony; crowned with thorns; bleeding with scourges; buffeted with cruel hands; spat upon by impure mouths; laden with thy fatal burden; distended upon that torturing cross; nailed to that tree of shame and curse; reviled and insulted upon by the vilest of men; and, at last, that no part of thy precious blood might remain unshed, pierced to the heart, by the spear of a late and impertinent malice.

Thus, thus, O God and Saviour, wouldest thou be *manifested in the flesh,* that the torments of thy flesh and thy spirit might be manifested to that world, which thou camest to redeem: thus, wast thou *wounded for our transgressions;* thus, wast thou *bruised for our iniquities;* thus, *were the chastisements of our peace upon thee;* and thus, *with thy stripes are we healed;* Isaiah liii. 5. O blessed, but still incomprehensible Mystery of Godliness; *God* thus *manifested in the flesh,* in weakness, contempt, shame, pain, death!

Once only, O Blessed Jesu, while thou wert wayfaring upon this globe of earth, didst thou put on glory; even upon Mount Tabor, in thy heavenly Transfiguration: then, and there, did thy face shine as the sun, and thy raiment was white as the light; Matth. xvii. 2. Mark ix. 2, 3. Luke ix. 29. How easy had it been for thee, to have continued this celestial splendor to thy Humanity, all the whole time of thy sojourning upon earth, that so thou mightest have been adored of all mankind! How would all the nations under heaven have flocked unto thee, and fallen down at the feet of so glorious a Majesty! What man in all the world would not have said with Peter, *Lord, it is good for us to be here?* Or, if it had pleased thee to have commanded Moses and Elias to wait upon thee, in thy mediatory perambulation; and to attend thee at Jerusalem, on the Mount of Sion, as they did in the Mount of Tabor; whom hadst thou not, in a zealous astonishment, drawn after thee? But, it was thy will, and the pleasure of thy Heavenly Father, that this glorious appearance should soon be overshadowed with a cloud: and, as those celestial guests, now in the midst of thy glory, spent their conference about thy bitter sufferings, and thine approaching departure out of the world; so wert thou, for the great work of our redemption, willing to be led from the Mount Tabor to Mount Calvary, from the height of that glory to the lowest depth of sorrow, pain, exinanition.

Thus vile wert thou, O Saviour, in the flesh; but, in this vileness of flesh, *manifested* to be *God*. How did all thy creatures, in this extremity of thine abasement, agree to acknowledge and celebrate thine Infinite Deity! The angels came down from heaven, to visit and attend thee: the sun pulled in his head, as abhorring to look upon the sufferings of his Maker: the earth was covered over with darkness, and quaked for the horror of that indignity, which was offered to thee in that bloody passion: the rocks rent: the graves opened themselves; and sent up their long since putrefied tenants, to wait upon thee, the Lord of Life, in thy glorious Resurrection: so as thou, in thy despised and crucified flesh, wert abundantly *manifested* to be the Almighty *God* of Heaven and Earth.

SECT. IV.

O Blessed Saviour, thou, the true *God manifested in the flesh*, be thou pleased to manifest unto the soul of thy servant the unspeakable riches of thy love and mercy to mankind, in that great work of our redemption. Vouchsafe to affect my heart, with a lively sense of that infinite goodness of thine, towards the wretchedest of thy creatures: that, for our sake, thou camest down, and clothedst thyself in our flesh: and clothedst that pure and holy flesh, with all the miseries that are incident to this sinful flesh of ours: and wast content to undergo a bitter, painful, ignominious death from the hands of man; that, by dying, thou mightest overcome death, and ransom him from that hell, to which he was, without thee, irrecoverably forfeited; and fetch him forth to life, liberty,

and glory. Oh, let me not see only, but feel, this thy great Mystery of Godliness effectually working me to all hearty thankfulness for so inestimable a mercy; to all holy resolutions to glorify thee, in all my actions, in all my sufferings. Didst thou, O Saviour, being God Eternal, take flesh for me; and shall not I, when thou callest, be willing to lay down this sinful flesh for thee again? Wert thou content to abridge thyself, for the time, not only of thy heavenly magnificence, but of all earthly comforts, for my sake; and shall not I, for thy dear sake, renounce all the wicked pleasures of sin? Didst thou wear out the days of thy flesh in poverty, toil, reproach, and all earthly hardship; and shall I spend my time, in pampering this flesh in wanton dalliance, in the ambitious and covetous pursuit of vain honours and deceivable riches? Blessed Lord, thou wert manifested in the flesh, not only to be a ransom for our souls, but to be a precedent for our lives: far, far be it from me, thus to imitate the great pattern of holiness. O Jesu, the Author and Finisher of my Faith and Salvation, teach me to tread in thy gracious steps; to run, with patience, the race that is set before me; to endure the cross, to despise the shame; to be crucified to the world; to work all righteousness.

SECT. V.

How easily could I be drawn to envy the privilege of those eyes, which saw thee here walking upon earth, O God and Saviour, in the days of thy manifesting thyself in flesh? Oh, what a happy spectacle was this, to see the face of him, in whom the Godhead dwelt bodily! All the world is not worth such a sight. Whither could I not wish to go, to see but a just portraiture of that shape, wherein thou wert pleased to converse with men?

But thy holy Apostle checks this useless curiosity in me, while he says, *If we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him so no more;* 2 Cor. v. 16. It is not the outside of thy human form, the view whereof can make us more holy, or more happy. Judas saw thee, as well as he, that lay in thy bosom: those saw thee, that maligned and persecuted thee; and shall once again see thee, to their utmost horror; see him, whom they pierced. They saw that flesh, in which God was manifested: they saw not *God manifested in the flesh.* It is our great comfort and privilege, that it was flesh, wherein God was manifested; but it is not in the flesh, but in the Deity, to render us blessed.

O Saviour, I dare not beg of thee, so to manifest thyself to me, as thou didst to thy Chosen Vessel, in his way to Damascus; or to thy First Martyr, in the storm of his lapidation: these miraculous manifestations are not for my meanness to sue for. But, let me never cease to crave of thee a double manifestation of thyself to me: be pleased to manifest thyself to me, in the clear illuminations of thy Spirit; let me by the eyes of my faith clearly see thee both sprawling in the manger, and walking upon earth, and tempted in the wilderness, and arraigned in the judgment-hall, and suffering upon Calvary, and rising out of thy tomb, and ascending from

thy Olivet, and reigning in heaven, and there interceding for me: and, after my approaching dissolution, let my soul see thee in that glorified flesh, wherein thou wert manifested to the world; and in the Majesty of that all-glorious Deity, which assumed it to that ever blessed society of glory.

SECT. VI.

It was thy mercy, O God, that thou wouldest not keep up thyself close in thine eternal, spiritual, and incomprehensible essence, unknown to thy creatures upon earth; but, that thou wouldest be manifested to the world. It was yet thy further mercy, that thou wert not only pleased to manifest thyself to man, in the wonderful works of thy creation, (since those invisible things of thine are understood, and clearly seen by the things that are made, even thine eternal power and Godhead; Rom. i. 20:) but to manifest thyself yet more clearly to us in thy sacred word, the blessed oracles of thine eternal truth. But it was the highest pitch of thy mercy, that thou wouldest manifest thyself yet more to us in the flesh: thou mightest have sent us thy gracious messages by the hands of thine angels, those glorious ministering spirits, that do continually attend thy throne: this would not content thee; but, such was thy love to us forlorn wretches, that thou wouldest come thyself, to finish the work of our redemption. Neither didst thou think it enough, to come to us in a spiritual way; imparting thyself to us by secret suggestions and inspirations, by dreams and visions, but wouldest vouchsafe openly to be manifested in our flesh.

How then, O my God, how wert thou *manifested in the flesh?* was not the flesh thy veil? Heb. x. 20. and wherefore serves a veil, but to hide and cover? Did not thy Deity then lie hid and obscured, while thou wert here on earth, under the veil of thy flesh? How then wert thou *manifested in that flesh*, wherein thou didst lie obscured? Surely, thou wert certainly manifested in respect of thy presence, in that sacred flesh of thine; though, for the time, thy power and majesty lay hid under the veil. Sometimes, thou wert pleased, that this Sun of thy Deity should break forth, in the glorious beams of Divine Operations; to the dazzling of the eyes of men and devils; to the full eviction of thine omnipotent power against thy envious gainsayers: at other times, thou wert content it should be clouded over with the dim and dusky appearances of human infirmity. The more thou wert obscured, the more didst thou manifest thy most admirable humility, and unparallelable love to mankind, whose weakness thou disdainedst not to take up; and, the more thou didst exert thy power, in thy miraculous works, the more didst thou glorify thyself, and vindicate thine Almighty Deity thus *manifested in the flesh.* Oh, that thou wouldest enable me to give thee the due praise, both of thine Infinite Mercy in this thine humble obscurity, and of thy Divine Omnipotence; who, as thou wert *manifested in the flesh,* so wast also *justified in the Spirit.*

SECT. VII.

—justified in the Spirit—

He, that should have seen thee, O Saviour, working in Joseph's shop, or walking in the fields or streets of Nazareth, or journeying towards Jerusalem, would have looked upon thee as a mere man: neither did thy garb or countenance bewray any difference in thee from the ordinary sort of men. So did thy Godhead please to conceal itself, for a time, in that flesh, wherein thou wouldest be manifested: it was thine all-working and co-essential Spirit, by whose evident testimonies and mighty operations, thy Deity was irrefragably made good to the world.

If the doubtful sons of men shall, in their peevish infidelity, be apt to renew the question of John's disciples: *Art thou he, that should come, or shall we look for another?* thine ever blessed and co-eternal Spirit hath fully justified thee, for that only true, absolute, perfect Mediator, by whom the great work of man's redemption is accomplished. While the gates of hell want neither power, nor malice, nor subtlety, it is not possible, that thy Divine Person should want store of enemies. These, in all successions of times, have dared to open their blasphemous mouths against thy Blessed Deity: but, against all their hellish oppositions, thou wert still and shalt be ever justified, by thy co-omnipotent Spirit; in those convictive wonders, which thou wroughtest upon earth; in those miraculous gifts and graces, which thou pouredst out upon men; in that glorious resurrection and ascension of thine, wherein thou didst victoriously triumph over all the powers of death and hell.

Lo, then, ye perverse Jews and scoffing Gentiles, that are still ready to upbraid us with the impotency and sufferings of a despised Redeemer; and to tell us of the rags of his manger, of the homeliness of his education, of his temptation and transportation by the devil, of his contemptible train, of his hunger and thirst, of his weariness and indigence, of his whips and thorns, of his agony in the garden of Gethsemane, of his opprobrious crucifixion in Calvary, of his parted garments and his borrowed grave: is not this He, to whose homely cradle a glorious and supernatural star guided the Sages of the East for their adoration? is not this He, whose birth, declared by one glorious angel, was celebrated by a multitude of the heavenly host, with that divine anthem, of, *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men?* Luke ii. 9—14: is not this He, that filled the world with his divine and beneficial miracles; healing all diseases by his word, restoring limbs to the lame, giving eyes to the born blind, casting out devils, raising the dead, commanding winds and seas, acknowledged by an audible voice from heaven? is not this He, whom the very ejected devils were forced to confess to be the Son of the Everliving God? whom the heaven and all the elements owned for their Almighty Creator? whose sufferings darkened the sun, and shook the earth, and rent the rocks in pieces? and, lastly, whom the dead

saints and the heavenly angels attended, in his powerful resurrection and glorious ascension? O Saviour, abundantly *justified in the Spirit* against all the malignances of men and devils!

SECT. VIII.

If thy malicious persecutors, whose hand was in thy most cruel crucifixion, shall, for the covering of their own shame, blazon thee for a deceiver of the people; how convincingly wert thou *justified in the Spirit*, by the dreadful and miraculous descent of the Holy Ghost, in the cloven and fiery tongues; and that sudden variety of language, for the spreading of the glory of thy Name over all the nations of the earth!

If the unbelieving world, bewitched with their former superstition, shall furiously oppose thy Name and Gospel, in the times immediately succeeding; how notably art thou *justified in the Spirit*, by the sudden stopping of the mouths of their hellish oracles, by the powerful predications of thy holy Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Doctors; seconded by such undeniable miracles, as shamed and astonished, if not won the gainsayers!

But, O Saviour, being thus clearly *justified in the Spirit* against the old spite of hell, with what shame and horror do I see thine Eternal Godhead called into question, by the misgoverned wits of certain late misnamed Christians! who, as if they would raise up cursed Arius from his hateful grave, have dared to renew those blasphemous cavils against thy Sacred Person, which, with so great authority and full evidence of the Spirit, were long since cried down to that hell, whence, to the great contumely of heaven, they were most wickedly sent up into the world. Woe is me, their damned founder did not send down his soul into that fatal draught, in a more odious way; than these his followers vent themselves upward, in most unsavory and pestilent contradictions to thee, the Lord of Life and Glory. But, even against these, art thou *justified in the Spirit*, speaking in thy Divine Scriptures; whose evident demonstrations do fully convince their calumnies and false suggestions, and vindicate thy Holy Name and Blessed Deity from all their devilish and frivolous argutations.

Is there any weak soul, that makes doubt of thy plenary satisfaction for his sin, of the perfect accomplishment of the great work of man's redemption? how absolutely art thou *justified*, O Blessed Jesu, *in the Spirit*, in that thou raisedst thyself from the dead; quitting that prison of the grave, whence thou couldest not have come, till thou hadst paid the utmost farthing, wherein we stood indebted to heaven!

O Saviour, not more concealed in the flesh than manifestly *justified in the Spirit* for my all-sufficient Redeemer, not more meekly yielding to death *for our offences* than powerfully *raised up again for our justification;* Rom. iv. 25: how should I bless and praise thee, both for thine humble self-dejection in respect of thine

assumed flesh, and for thy powerful justification in thine Infinite and Eternal Spirit! that Holy Ghost, whereby thou wert conceived in the womb of the Virgin, justified thee in thy life, death, resuscitation. Now, then, how confidently can I trust thee with my soul, who hast approved thyself so complete and almighty a Redeemer! O Blessed Jesu, with what assurance do I cast myself upon thee, for thy present protection, for my future salvation! how boldly can I defy all the powers of darkness, while I am in the hand of so gracious and omnipotent a Mediator! *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth;* Rom. viii. 33. Even thou, the God who wast *manifested in the flesh* and *justified in the Spirit*, shalt justify and save my spirit, soul, and body, in the day of our appearance before thee.

SECT. IX.

—seen of angels—

O SAVIOUR, it is no mystery, that, being *manifested in the flesh*, thou wert seen of men; but it is no small part of the Great Mystery of Godliness, that thou, who art the God of Spirits, wert seen by those heavenly spirits, clothed in flesh. It could not be but great news to the angels, to see their God born, and conversing as man, with men. For a man to see an angel, is a matter of much wonder; but for an angel to see God become man, is a far greater wonder: since in this, the change concerns an infinite subject; in the other, a finite though incorporeal.

But, pause here a while, O my soul, and enquire a little into these strange spectators. *Seen of angels?* who, or what might those be? Are there any such real, incorporeal, permanent substances; or are they only things of imagination, and extemporary representations of the pleasure of the Almighty? Woe is me, that no error may be wanting to this prodigious age, do we live to see a reviction of the old Sadduceism, so long since dead and forgotten? Was Gabriel, that appeared and spake to Daniel, (Dan. viii. 16, 17,) nothing but a supernatural phantasm? And what then was the Gabriel, that appeared, with the happy news of a Saviour, to the Blessed Virgin? What are the angels of those little ones, whereof our Saviour speaks, which do always behold the face of his Father in Heaven? Matth. xviii. 10. What were those angels, that appeared to the shepherds, with the tidings and gratulations of the Saviour born at Bethlehem? Luke ii. 9—15. What was that beneficent spirit, that visited Peter in the prison; smote him on the side, to wake him from his sleep; shook off his chains; threw open the iron gate; and rescued him from the bloody hands of Herod? Acts xii. 7—10. What are those spirits, who shall be God's reapers at the end of the world; to cut down the tares, and gather the wheat into his barn? Shortly, what were all those spirits, whereof both Testaments are full, which God was pleased to employ, in his frequent missions to the earth? were these phantasms too? Certainly, though there may be many Orders, yet there is but one general condition of those angelical attendants on the Throne of the Almighty. Even in the Old Testament, was it a supernatural

apparition of fancy, that, in one night, smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt? was it a supernatural apparition of fancy, that, in one night, laid a hundred fourscore and five thousand Assyrians dead upon the ground? Could these be any other, than the acts of living and powerful agents? It is not for us, to contend about words: those, that are disposed to devise paradoxes, may frame to themselves what senses they please of their own terms: this we are sure of, that the angels are truly existing, spiritual, intelligent, powerful, eviternal creatures; whose being is not exposed to our sense, but evidenced both to our faith and reason; not circumscribed in any gross locality, but truly being where they are, and acting according to their spiritual nature.

Of these angels, O Blessed Saviour, wert thou seen manifested in the flesh, to their wonder and gratulation. That thou, who hadst taken our flesh, wert visible, was no whit strange; herein thou wert a plain and happy object to all eyes: but how the angels, being merely spiritual substances, could see thee, may be part of this Great Mystery. Doubtless, they saw thee, both before and ever since thou camest into the world, with eyes, like themselves, spiritual; and, not seldom, saw thee, being incarnate, with the assumed eyes of those bodies, wherein they appeared. Thus they saw, and adored, and proclaimed thee, in thy first salutation of the world; when thou layest in that homely posture, in the manger at Bethlehem; singing that sweet and celestial carol at thy Nativity, *Glory be to God in the highest:* they saw thee in the wild desert, where no creatures appeared to thee, but either beasts or devils: there they saw thee, pined with fasting, conflicted with the Prince of Darkness: they saw thee foiling that presumptuous enemy; not without wonder, doubtless, at the boldness of that daring spirit, and joyful applause at thy happy victory: they saw thee, but, as knowing there was no use of seconds in this duel of thine, unseen of thee, till the full end of that great combat; then they shewed themselves to thee, as willing to be known to have been the secret witnesses of the fight, and glad congratulators of thy triumph; then they came and ministered unto thee. Never were they but ready to have visibly attended thee, hadst thou been pleased to require so sensible a service; but the state of a servant, which thou chusedst to undergo, suited not with the perpetuity of so glorious a retinue. Whether, therefore, they were seen to thee, or not seen, it was their great honour and happiness, and a main part of the Great Mystery of Godliness, that thou, who art the true *God manifested in the flesh*, wert *seen of angels*.

They saw thee in the garden, in thy sad agony; and, if angels could have been capable of passion in that state of their glory, could have been, no doubt, content to suffer in and with thee. With what eyes do we think they looked upon thy bloody sweat; and the frowns of thy Heavenly Father, which they saw bent against thee, in our persons, for the sin of mankind, which thou camest to expiate? Now in this doleful condition, so wert thou

seen of angels, that the angels were seen of thee: for, lo, *there appeared an angel from heaven strengthening* thee; Luke xxii. 43: O the deep humiliation of *God, manifested in the flesh;* that thou, O Jesu, the God and Lord of all the Angels of Heaven, shouldest, in this bloody conflict with thy Father's wrath for our sins, need and receive comfort from a created angel, thy servant!

Whilst thou wert grappling with the powers of darkness, there was no need of aid: only, after the fight, *angels came, and ministered to* thee: but, now that thou must struggle under the wrath of thy Father for man's sin, there was use of the consolation of one of those angels, whereof thou commandedst millions. O Blessed Saviour, had not the face of thy Heavenly Father been clouded to thee, standing in the stead of our guiltiness, it had been no less than presumption, in any finite power, to tender thee any suggestions of comfort; but now, alas, those beatifical beams were so, for the time, hid from thine eyes; and the sweet influences of light and joy, arising therefrom, were, for that sad instant, suspended; so as nothing appeared to thee, that while, but the darkness of displeasure and horror: now, therefore, the comforts of a creature could not be but seasonable and welcome; so that thou disdainedst not to be strengthened by an angel. Extreme distress looks not so much to the hand, that brings supply; as to the supply, it brings. If but one of thy three drowsy clients could have shaken off his sleep, and have let fall to thee some word of consolation, in that heavy fit of thine, thou hadst not refused it; how much less, the cordial intimations of a heavenly monitor! Neither was it improper for thee, who wast content to be made *a little inferior to the angels*, (Heb. ii. 9.) to receive some spiritual aid from the hands of an angel.

What then, O Saviour, was the strengthening, which thou receivedst from this officious spirit, in this pang of thine agony? Doubtless, it was not any communication of an additional power to bear up, under that heavy pressure of the sins of the whole world, which drew from thee those sweats of blood: no angel in heaven was able to contribute that to the Son of God: but it was a sweet and forcible representation to thy disconsolate Humanity, of the near approach of a happy eluctation, out of those torments of thy sufferings; and of the glorious crown of thy victory, immediately succeeding.

SECT. X.

And now, soon after, those angels, that saw thee sweating in thine Agony, and bleeding on thy Cross, saw thee also triumphing over death, in thy Resurrection: they attended thee joyfully in the vault of thy sepulchre, and saw thee trampling upon the last enemy; being then suitably habited to so blessed an occasion, in white shining vestures.

How gladly were they employed about that most glorious solemnity; both as actors in the service, and as the first heralds of thy victories over death! I find one of them obsequiously making

ready for thy coming out of those chambers of death, upon thine Easter morning; rolling away that massy stone, which the vain care of thine adversaries had laid, curiously sealed, upon the mouth of that cave, for the prevention of thy fore-threatened Resurrection; and sitting upon it with a countenance like lightning, and his garment white as snow: the terror of whose presence made the guard to shake, and to become as dead men; Matth. xxviii. 2, 3, 4: I find two of them no less glorious, sitting the one at the head, the other at the feet of that bed of earth, whereon thou hadst newly slept; John xx. 12. By these angels wert thou both seen and attended; and, no doubt, but as, at thy first coming into the world, when but one angel published thy birth, he was seconded by a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God with hymns of rejoicing for thy Nativity; so, when but one or two angels were seen at thy second birth, which was thy glorious Resurrection, there were more of that heavenly company invisibly celebrating the joyful triumph of that blessed day; wherein, having conquered death and hell, thou shewedst thyself, in a glorified condition, to the redeemed world of men.

After this, when, for the securance of thy Resurrection, upon which all our faith justly dependeth, thou hadst spent forty days upon earth, I find thee upon Mount Olivet, at thy most glorious Ascension, not seen only, but proclaimed and fore-promised, in thy certain and at least equally-glorious return, by the blessed angels: *And, behold, while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come again, as ye have seen him go into heaven;* Acts i. 10, 11.

But, O Saviour, these views of thee by thine angels hitherto were but special, and visible even by bodily eyes: how do I, by the eyes of my soul, see thee both attended up in that heavenly progress, and welcomed into thine imperial heaven, by all the host of those celestial spirits! no small part of whose perpetual happiness it is, to see thee, in thy glorified Humanity, sitting at the right-hand of Majesty: there, they enjoy thee: there, they sing continual Hallelujahs *to him, that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.*

SECT. XI.

—preached unto the Gentiles—

If thine angels, O Blessed Jesu, desired to look into this great and deep Mystery of the Gospel, their longing is satisfied in the sight of thy blessed Incarnation, and the full accomplishment of the great office of thy Mediatorship; since, *now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, is made known the manifold wisdom of God,* in this wonderful work of man's redemption; 1 Pet. i. 12: *which, from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God, who created all things by* thee; Eph. iii. 9. But, that *the unsearchable riches of Christ*

should be preached to the Gentiles, (Eph. iii. 8.) how marvellous an accession is it to the greatness of this Divine Mystery of Godliness! Of old, *in Judah was God known: his name was great in Israel: In Salem was his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Sion;* Psalm lxxvi. 1, 2: but, in the mean while, we, miserable Gentiles, sat in darkness, and in the shadow of death; *without God in the world;* exposed to the displeasure of heaven; tyrannized over by the powers of hell; *strangers from the covenants of promise;* forlorn, *without hope* of mercy; Eph. ii. 12. That, therefore, O Saviour, thou vouchsafedst, in the tender bowels of thine infinite compassion, to look down from heaven upon us; and, at the last, graciously to visit us, in the clear revelation of the saving truth of thy Gospel; to break down the partition-wall, whereby we were excluded from any participation with thee; to own us for thy people, and to admit us unto the fellowship of thy saints: O the wonderful Mystery of Godliness, effectually manifested to us out-cast Gentiles, to our conversion, to our eternal salvation!

What *a veil*, O God, was *spread over all nations!* Isaiah xxv. 7: a dark veil of ignorance, of error, of impiety. How did our forefathers walk in their own ways; following the sinful lusts of their own hearts; worshipping dumb idols; sacrificing to all the host of heaven; offering, not their substance only, but their sons and daughters to devils! It was thine own infinite goodness, that moved thee to pity our woeful and despaired condition; and to send thine Eternal Son into the world, to be no less *a light to lighten the Gentiles*, than *to be the glory of thy people Israel;* Luke ii. 32.

How fully hast thou made good thy gracious promises, long since published by thy holy prophets! *It shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see my glory;* Isaiah lxvi. 18. And, again, *It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow to it: and many people shall go, and say, Come ye, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths;* Isaiah ii. 2, 3. And, again, *Behold, thus saith the Lord, I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders;* Isaiah xlix. 22. And, again, *Behold, thou shalt call a nation, that thou knowest not; and nations, that know not thee, shall run unto thee, because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee;* Isaiah lv. 5. O blessed then, ever blessed be thy name, O God, that thou wouldest vouchsafe to be made known among us Gentiles: *Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord, glory and strength: give unto the Lord the glory due to his name;* Psalm xcvi. 7, 8. *All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee: they shall sing unto thy name;* Psalm lxvi. 4. *All the ends of the*

world shall remember, and run unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee; Psalm xxii. 27.

How did we, O Saviour, of old lie under the pity and contempt of those thy people, which challenged a peculiarity of thy favour! *We have a little sister*, said thy Jewish Spouse, *and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister, when she shall be spoken for?* Cant. viii. 8. Take no thought for us, O thou once beloved Synagogue of the Jews: thy little sister is not only spoken for, but contracted; but happily married to her Lord and Saviour; having been *betrothed to* him *for ever, in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies;* Hosea ii. 19: so as we can now retutn our pity to thee, and say, "We had an elder sister, which had breasts; but her breasts are long since wrinkled and dried up: what shall we do for our sister, in these days of her barrenness, and just neglect? We shall surely pray for our sister, that God would be pleased to return to her, in his compassion of old; and restore her to the happy state of her former fruitfulness." We follow them with our prayers; they us, with malice and despite. With how envious eyes, did they look upon those first heralds of the Gospel, who carried the glad tidings of salvation to the despised Gentiles! What cruel storms of persecution did they raise against those blessed messengers, whose feet deserved to be beautiful! wherein, their obstinate unbelief turned to our advantage: for, after they had made themselves unworthy of that Gospel of peace, that blessing was instantly derived upon us Gentiles, and we happily changed conditions with them. The natural branches of the good olive tree being cut off, we, that were of the wild olive, contrary to nature, are graffed in; Rom. xi. 17. O *the goodness and severity of God! on them which fell, severity;* on us, which succeeded, *goodness;* v. 22. They were once the children; and we, the dogs under the table: the crumbs were our lot; the bread was theirs. Now is the case, through their wilful incredulity, altered: they are the dogs; and we, the children: we sit at a full table, while their hunger is not satisfied with scraps. *The casting away of them* was *the reconciling of the world,* v. 15: their fall, our exaltation. It is not for us to be high minded, but to fear; v. 20.

The great sheet with four corners is let down from heaven, with all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and creeping things, and fowls of the air: we may kill and eat, without any difference of clean or unclean; but even of clean meats we may surfeit; Acts x. 11, 12. O Saviour, it is thy great mercy, that thou hast been thus long preached amongst us, Gentiles; that we, in the remote ends of the world, have seen the salvation of our God: but, if we shall abuse thy graces to wantonness, and walk unanswerably to this freedom of thy Gospel, how both just and easy is it for thee, to withdraw these blessings from us, and to return us to the woeful condition of our old forlornness. Oh, let it not be enough, that thou art preached amongst us Gentiles, but do thou work us to a holy obedience of thy blessed Gospel: reclaim us from our abo-

minable licentiousness of life, from our hellish heresies of opinion; and teach us to walk worthy of that great salvation, which thou hast held forth unto us: so shall it be our happiness, that thou wert preached to us Gentiles; otherwise, our condemnation shall be so much the deeper, as our light hath been more clear, and our means more powerful.

SECT. XII.

—believed on in the world— So poor and despicable, O Saviour, wouldest thou have thy coming in the flesh, that it is no marvel, if the vain world utterly disregarded thee: for what is the misjudging world led by, but by outward pomp and magnificence? Yea, thy very domestic followers, after so long acquaintance with thy person and doctrine, even when thou wert risen from the dead, could think of the royalty of a temporal kingdom to be restored to Israel: and still, the perverse generations of Jewish Infidels, after the conviction of so many hundred years, gape for an earthly monarchy of their expected Messiah. That, therefore, appearing to the world in so contemptible means, so born, so living, so dying, thou shouldest be universally *believed on in the world*, is the just wonder of the Mystery of Godliness.

It was the largeness of thy divine bounty, to allow thy Gospel preached to every creature: but, alas, it is liberally preached; sparingly received: *Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* Isaiah liii. 1. It was the complaint of thy Chosen Vessel, the Doctor of the Gentiles, *We preach Christ crucified; to the Jews, a stumbling block; to the Greeks, foolishness;* 1 Cor. i. 23. What a power, therefore, is there, in the Mystery of Godliness, that thou art not preached only, but *believed on in the world!*

Hadst thou exhibited thyself in the magnificence and majesty of the Son of God; attended, either with the glorious angels of heaven, or the mighty monarchs of the earth; scattering honours and riches upon thy followers, in abundance: how large a train wouldest thou have had; how would all the earth have rung with Hosannas to the Highest! Matt. xxi. 9. but now, that thou wouldest come as the Son of Man; in the homeliest condition of birth, education, life, and death; not having so much as a house wherein to put thy head, or a grave wherein to lay thy dead body; now, that thou wouldest suffer thyself to be spat upon, scourged, crucified, reviled: that the stubborn hearts of men should be so convinced by the truth and power of thy Deity, that thou art *believed on in the world*, is the great Mystery of Godliness.

The powers of darkness could not but see their kingdom shaken, by thy coming down to the earth, upon this errand of thy mediation: how busy and violent, therefore, were those gates of hell, in opposing so glorious a work! How did they stir up cruel tyrants, in the first dawning of thy Gospel, furiously to persecute this way unto death! What exquisite torments, of all kinds, did they devise,

for the innocent professors of thy Name! How drunken was the earth, with the blood of thy martyrs, in all parts! And, when they saw how little force could prevail, since this palm-tree grew the more by depression, how did they set their wits on work, in attempting by fraud to bring about their cursed designs! How cunningly did they go about to undermine that wall, which they could not batter! Now, whole troops of the skilfullest engineers of hell are sent up, by damned heresies to blow up and overthrow that truth, which they could not beat down. One while thine eternal Deity, another while thy sacred Humanity, is impugned by those, who yet style themselves Christians: one while either of thy Natures, another while thy entire Person, is laid at by those, that profess themselves thy friends and clients: one while thine Offices, another while thy Scriptures, are opposed by those, who yet would seem thine. And, though their insinuations have been so craftily carried and their colours so well laid, that no small part of the world hath been for the time beguiled by them, and drawn into a plausible misbelief; yet still, great hath the truth ever been, and ever prevailed; happily triumphing over those damnable heresies, that have dared to lift up their head against her, and chasing them into their hell: so as, in spite of men and devils, the Great Mystery of Godliness is gloriously vindicated, and *God manifested in* weak *flesh* is *believed on in the world.*

SECT. XIII.

THE world is not all of one making: there is a world of creatures, not capable of belief: there is a *world* of men, that *lieth in wickedness*, (1 John v. 19.) refusing to believe: there is a world of faithful souls, that do believe; and, in believing, are saved: and, Oh, Blessed Saviour, that thou wouldest graciously enlarge this world of believers!

Woe is me, what a world of this world of men lies still under the damnable estate of unbelief! Alas, for those poor savage Indians, that know nothing of a God; which, out of their fear and tyrannical superstition, worship devils, that they may not hurt them: for those ignorant, and woefully blindfolded Mahometans, that are not allowed to see any more, than one blink of thee, as a great Prophet; being taught to blaspheme thy Deity, and to enslave their faith to a wretched impostor: for those obstinate Jews, that are wilfully blind, and will not see the light of that truth concerning thee their Messiah, which shineth forth clearly to them, in the writings of the prophets, in the undeniable accomplishment of all former predictions, in the powerful conviction of miraculous works. What Christian is there, whose bowels do not yearn, whose heart doth not bleed, at the thought of so many millions of miserable unbelievers?

O thou, the God of infinite mercy and compassion, in whose hands are all the hearts of the sons of men, look graciously from

heaven upon the dark souls of these poor infidels, and enlighten them with the saving knowledge of the Great Mystery of Godliness: let the beams of thy Gospel break forth unto them; and work them to a sound belief in thee their *God, manifested in the flesh.* Fetch home into thy fold all those, that belong to thy merciful election: bring in *the fulness of the Gentiles;* Rom. xi. 25: *gather together the outcasts of Israel;* Psalm cxlvii. 2. and glorify thyself, in completing a world of believers.

And, for us, on whom the ends of the world are come; as we have been graciously called to the comfortable notice of this Mystery of Godliness, and have professed and vowed a steadfast belief in thy Name; so keep us, by thy Good Spirit, in a holy and constant avowance of all those main truths, concerning thy sacred Person, Natures, and Offices, unto our last end: for thou seest, O Blessed Jesu, that there is now such a hell of the spirits of error broken loose into the world, as if they meant to evacuate this part of the Mystery of Godliness, Christ *believed on in the world.* Oh, do thou, by thy mighty power, restrain and quell these pernicious heresies; and send down these wicked spirits back to their chains: so as our most holy faith may ever remain inviolable, till the day of thy glorious return.

Neither let us sit down, contented that we hold fast and believe the mere history of thy life, death, and resurrection; without which as we cannot be saved, so with it alone we cannot: but do thou, by thy Good Spirit, work and settle in our souls, a sound, lively, operative, justifying faith in thee; whereby we may not only believe on thee as a common Saviour, but believe in thee as ours; bringing thee home to our hearts, and confidently relying upon thee, for the acquittance of all our sins, and for our eternal salvation. Oh, that thou mightest be thus *believed on in the world:* and, if not by them, in the notion of their universality; yet, by us, who profess thy Name, to thy great glory and our everlasting comfort!

SECT. XIV.

—received up into glory.—

In these occurrences on the earth, *Great is the Mystery of Godliness;* but the highest pitch of this great mystery, O Saviour, is, that thou, thus manifested in our flesh, wert *received up into glory:* even that celestial glory, which thou enjoyest in the highest heavens, sitting on the right-hand of majesty; seen and adored, by all that blessed company of the souls of just men made perfect, and the innumerable troops of glorious angels; Heb. xii. 22, 23.

If some erroneous fancies have placed their heaven here below upon earth, ours is above; and so is thine, O Blessed Jesu, who wert taken up in glory. Thou couldest not be taken up to any earthly ascent, since thou tookest thy farewell on the top of Mount Olivet; but, from this globe of earth, thou ascendedst through the skies to that empyreal heaven: there thou remainest in glory, in-

finite and incomprehensible. The many and intentive beholders of thy last parting, did not cast their eyes down into the valley; neither did see cause, with the fifty sons of the prophets, to seek for thee, as they would needs do for Elijah, in vallies and mountains; 2 Kings ii. 16: they saw and worshipped thee, leisurely ascending up through the region of this lower heaven, till a cloud intercepted thee from their sight; neither then could easily be taken off, either by the interposition of that dark body, or by the interpellation of angels.

And now, O Blessed Saviour, how is my soul ravished with the meditation of thy glorious reception into thy heaven! Surely, if the inhabitants of those celestial mansions may be capable of any increase of joy, they then both found and shewed it, when they saw and welcomed thee, entering, in thy glorified Humanity, into that thy eternal palace of blessedness; and, if there could be any higher or sweeter ditty of Hallelujah, it was then sung by the Choir of Angels and Saints. And may thy poor servants, warfaring and wandering here upon earth, even second them, in those heavenly songs of praises and gratulations: for wherein stands all our safety, hope, comfort, happiness, but in this, that thou, our Jesus, art *received up into glory;* and, having conquered all diverse powers, sittest on the right-hand of God the Father; crowned with honour and majesty?

O Jesu, thou art our head, we are thy body: how can the body but participate of the glory of the head? As for thyself therefore, so for us, art thou possessed of that heavenly glory: as thou sufferedst for us, so for us thou also reignest. Let every knee therefore bow unto thee, *of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth;* Phil. ii. 10. O blessed be thy name for ever and ever: *Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven, and in the earth is thine: thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head over all;* 1 Chr. xxix. 11.

And now, O Saviour, what a superabundant amends is made to thy glorified Humanity, for all thy bitter sufferings upon earth! Thine agony was extreme; but thy glory is infinite: thy cross was heavy; but thy crown transcendently glorious: thy pains were unconceivably grievous, but short; thy glory everlasting: if thou wert scorned by men, thou art now adored by angels: thou, that stoodest before the judgment seat of a Pilate, shalt come, in all heavenly magnificence, to judge both the quick and the dead: shortly, thou, which wouldest stoop to be a servant upon earth, rulest and reignest for ever in heaven, as the King of Eternal Glory.

O then, my soul, seeing thy Saviour is *received up into* this infinite *glory*, with what intention and fervour of spirit shouldest thou fix thine eyes upon that heaven, where he lives and reigns. How canst thou be but wholly taken up, with the sight and thought of that place of blessedness? How canst thou abide to grovel any longer on this base earth, where is nothing but vanity and vexation;

and refrain to mind the things above, where is all felicity and glory? With what longings and holy ambition shouldest thou desire to aspire to that place of eternal rest and beatitude, into which thy Saviour is ascended; and with him to partake of that glory and happiness, which he hath provided for all that love him! O Saviour, it is this clog of wretched infidelity and earthliness, that hangs heavy upon my soul; and keeps me from mounting up into thy presence, and from a comfortable fruition of thee. Oh, do thou take off this sinful weight from me, and raise up my affections and conversation unto thee: enable me constantly to enjoy thee, by a lively faith, here; till, by thy mercy, I shall be received into glory.

THE

INVISIBLE WORLD

DISCOVERED TO SPIRITUAL EYES,

AND

REDUCED TO USEFUL MEDITATION.

IN THREE BOOKS.

BY JOSEPH, BISHOP OF NORWICH.

THE PREFACE.

As those, that flit from their old home and betake themselves to dwell in another country where they are sure to settle, are wont to forget the faces and fashions whereto they were formerly inured, and to apply themselves to the knowledge and acquaintance of those with whom they shall afterwards converse; so it is here with me: being to remove from my earthly tabernacle, wherein I have worn out the few and evil days of my pilgrimage, to an abiding city above, I have desired to acquaint myself with that Invisible World, to which I am going; to enter-know my good God, and his blessed Angels and Saints, with whom I hope to pass a happy eternity: and if, by often and serious meditation, I have attained, through God's mercy, to any measure of lightsome apprehension of them and their blissful condition; I thought it could be no other than profitable to my fellow-pilgrims, to have it imparted unto them. And, as knowing we can never be sensible enough of our happiness, unless we know our own dangers and the woeful miscarriages of others; nor so fully bless our eyes with the sight of heaven, if we cast not some glances upon hell; I have held it requisite, to bestow some thoughts upon that dreadful Region of Darkness and Confusion: that, by the former of these, our desires may be whetted to the fruition of their blessedness; and, by the other, we may be stirred up to a care of avoiding those paths that lead down to that second death, and to a continual thankfulness unto that merciful God, whose infinite goodness hath delivered us from that pit of horror and perdition.

THE

INVISIBLE WORLD.

THE FIRST BOOK:—OF GOD AND HIS ANGELS.

SECT. I.

THAT THERE IS AN INVISIBLE WORLD.

WHO can think other, but that the great God of Heaven loseth much glory by our ignorance? for, how can we give him the honour due to his Name, while we conceive too narrowly of him and his works? To know him as he is, is past the capacity of our finite understanding: we must have other eyes, to discern that incomprehensible essence: but, to see him in his Divine Emanations, and marvellous works, which are the back parts of that glorious Majesty, is that, whereof we may be capable, and should be ambitious. Neither is there any thing in this world, that can so much import us: for, wherefore serves the eye of sense, but to view the goodly frame and furniture of the creation? Wherefore serves the eye of reason and faith, but to see that lively and invisible power, which governs and comprehends it?

Even this sensible, and material world, if we could conceive aright of it, is enough to amaze the most enlightened reason: for, if this globe of earth, in regard of the immense greatness of it, is wont, not unjustly, to be accounted a world, what shall we say of so many thousand stars, that are, for the most part, bigger than it? How can we but admire so many thousand worlds of light, rolling continually over our heads; all made by the omnipotent power, all regularly guided by the infinite providence, of the great God? How poorly must that man needs think of the workmanship of the Almighty, that looks upon all these, but as so many torches, set up in the firmament every evening, only so big as they seem! and, with what awful respects must he needs be carried to his Creator, that knows the vastness and perpetually-constant movings of those lightsome bodies, ruled and upheld only by the Mighty Word that made them!

There is store of wonders in the visible, but the spiritual and intelligible world is that, which is more worthy to take up our hearts: both as we are men, endued with reason; and as regenerate, enlightened by faith; being so much more excellent than the other, by how much more it is removed from all earthly means of apprehension. Brute creatures may behold these visible things, perhaps with sharper eyes than we; but spiritual objects are so utterly out of their reach, as if they had no being. Nearest, therefore, to beasts are those men, who suffer themselves to be so altogether led by their senses, as to believe nothing, but what is suggested by that purblind and unfaithful informer. Let such men doubt, whether they have a soul in their body, because their eye never met with it *; or, that there are any stars in the firmament at noon-day, because they appear not; or, that there is any air wherein they breathe, because nothing appears to them but an insensible vacuity.

Of all other, the Sadducees had been the most dull and sottish heretics, that ever were; if, as some have construed them, they had utterly denied the very being of any spirits. Sure, as learned Cameron † pleads for them, they could not be so senseless: for, believing the books of Moses, and being conscious of their own animation, their bosoms must needs convince them of their spiritual inmate: and what, but a spirit, could enable them to argue against spirits? and how could they hold a God, and no Spirit? It was bad enough, that they denied the immortality and constant subsistence of those angelical, immaterial substances: an opinion long since hissed out, not of the school of Christianity only, but of the very stalls and sties of the most brutish Paganism: although that, very long since, as is reported by Hosius and Prateolus, that cursed glazier of Gaunt, David George, durst wickedly rake it out of the dust; and, of late, some sceptics of our own have let fall some suspicious glances this way.

Surely, all, that know they have souls, must needs believe a world of spirits, which they see not; if from no other grounds, yet out of that analogy, which they cannot but find betwixt this lesser and that greater world. For, as this little world, Man, consists of an outward visible body; and an inward spiritual soul, which gives life and motion to that organical frame, so possessing all parts, that it is wholly in all, and in each part wholly: so must it also be in this great universe, the sensible and material part whereof hath being and moving from those spiritual powers, both supreme and subordinate, which dwell in it, and fill and actuate it. Every illuminated soul, therefore, looks about him with no other than St. Paul's eyes; whose profession it is, *We look not at the things, which are seen; but at the things, which are not seen: for the things, which are seen, are temporal; but the things, which are not seen, are eternal;* 2 Cor. iv. 18.

* *Nulla visibilia nisi per invisibilia videntur: tolle mentem, quæ non videtur; et incassum patebit oculus.* Greg. † Camer. in Act. xxiii. 8.

SECT. II.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE INVISIBLE WORLD.

I CANNOT quite mislike the conceit of Reuchlin and his Cabala, seconded by Galatinus, that as in an egg, the yolk lies in the midst encompassed round with the white, and that again by a film and shell; so the sensible world is inclosed within the intelligible: but, withal, I must add, that here is not a meer involution only, but a spiritual permeation and inexistence; yet without all confusion. For those pure and simple natures are not capable of mingling with gross, material substances: and the God of Order hath given them their own separate essences, offices, operations; as for the managing of their own spiritual commonwealth within themselves, so for the disposing, governing, and moving of this sensible world. As, therefore, we shall foully misconceive of a man, if we shall think him to be nothing but a body, because our eyes see no more; so we shall no less grossly err, if, beholding this outward fabric, we shall conceive of nothing to be in this vast universe, but the mere lifeless substance of the heavens and elements, which runs into our sight: those lively and active powers, that dwell in them, could not be such, if they were not purely spiritual.

Here then, above and beyond all worlds, and in this material and intelligible world, our illuminated eyes meet first with the God of Spirits; the DEITY, incomprehensible; the Fountain of all life and being; the infinite and self-existing Essence; one most pure, simple, eternal Act; the absolute, omnipotent, omnipresent Spirit: who, in himself, is more than a world of worlds; filling and comprehending both the spiritual and sensible world; in comparison of whom, this All is nothing, and but from him had been and were nothing. Upon this blessed object, O my soul, may thy thoughts ever dwell: where the more they are fixed, the more shall they find themselves ravished from the regard of all sensible things; and swallowed up with an admiration of that, which they are still further off from comprehending *.

Next to this All-glorious and Infinite Spirit, they meet with those Immaterial and Invisible Powers, who receive their original and continuance, their natures and offices, from that King of Glory: each one whereof is so mighty, as to make up a world of power alone; each one so knowing, as to contain a world of wisdom; and all of them so innumerably many, that their number is next to infinite; and all this numberless number is so perfectly united in one celestial policy, that their entire communion, under the laws and government of their sovereign Creator, makes them a complete world of spirits, invisibly living and moving both within and above this visible globe of the material world.

* *Omne tempus quo de Deo non cogitat, perdidisse se computat.* Bern. de spec. mon.

After these, we meet with the Glorified Souls of the Just; who, now let loose from this prison of clay, enjoy the full liberty of heaven; and, being at last reunited to their then immortal bodies, and to their most glorious Head, both are and possess a world of everlasting bliss.

Last of all, may thy thoughts fall upon those Infernal Powers of Darkness, *the spiritual wickednesses in heavenly places;* whose number, might, combination, makes up a dreadful world of evil angels, conflicting where they prevail not, and tormenting where they overcome.

These, together with the Reprobate Souls, whom they have captived, are the most horrible and woeful prospects of mischief and misery, which either world is subject unto.

Now all and every of these, howsoever, in respect of largeness, they may well pass for so many several worlds: yet, as we are wont to account the whole globe of heaven and earth, and the other inclosed elements, though vast in their several extents, to make up but one sensible world; so shall we consider all the entire specifications of spirits, but as ranked in so many regions of one immaterial and intelligible world.

Wherefore, let us first silently adore that *mundum archetypum*, that one transcendent, self-being, and infinite essence, in three most glorious persons, the Blessed Deity, which filleth heaven and earth with the majesty of his glory; as vailed with the beams of infiniteness, and hid in an inaccessible light: and let us turn our eyes to the spiritual guard, the invisible attendants of that Divine Majesty; without the knowledge and right apprehension whereof, we shall never attain to conceive of their God and ours, as we ought.

But, O ye blessed, immortal, glorious Spirits, who can know you, but he, that is of you? Alas, this soul of mine knows not itself: how shall it know you? Surely, no more can our minds conceive of you, than our eyes can see you: only, since he, that made you, hath given us some little glimpse of your subdivine natures, properties, operations, let us weakly, as we may, recount them to his glory in yours.

SECT. III.

THE ANGELS OF HEAVEN: THEIR NUMBERS.

THE good Lord forgive me, for that, amongst my other offences, I have suffered myself so much to forget, as his divine presence, so the presence of his holy angels. It is, I confess, my great sin, that I have filled mine eyes with other objects; and have been slack in returning praises to my God, for the continual assistance of those blessed and beneficent spirits, which have ever graciously attended me, without intermission, from the first hour of my conception to this present moment; neither shall ever, I hope, absent themselves from my tutelage and protection, till they shall have presented to my poor soul her final glory. Oh, that the dust and clay were so

washed out of my eyes, that I might behold, together with the presence, the numbers, the beauties, and excellencies of those my ever-present guardians!

When we are convinced of the wonderful magnitude of those goodly stars, which we see moving in the firmament, we cannot but acknowledge, that if God had made but one of them, he could never have been enough magnified in his power: but, when our sense joins with our reason, to force upon us, withal, an acknowledgment of the infinite numbers of those great luminaries; now, we are so far to seek of due admiration, that we are utterly lost in the amazement at this stupendous proof of omnipotence.

Neither is it otherwise with the invisible host of heaven. If the power of one angel be such, that he were able, at his Maker's appointment, to redact the world to nothing; and the nature of any one so eminent, that it far surmounts any part of the visible creation; what shall we say to those next-to-infinite Numbers of mighty and majestical spirits, wherewith the great God of Heaven hath furnished his throne and footstool?

I know not upon what grounds that (by some, magnified) Prophetess *, could so precisely compute, that if all men should be reckoned up, from the first Adam to the last man that shall stand upon the earth, there might be to each man assigned more than ten angels. Ambrose's account is yet fuller; who makes all mankind to be that one lost sheep in the parable, and the angels (whose choir the Great Shepherd left for a time, to come down to this earthly wilderness) to be the ninety and nine. Lo here, well near a hundred for one. Yet even that number is poor, in comparison of the reckoning of him †, who pretends to fetch it from the Chosen Vessel rapt into paradise; who presumes to tell us there are greater numbers of angels in every several rank, than there is of the particulars of whatsoever material things in this world. The Bishop of Herbipolis ‡ instanceth boldly in stars, in leaves, in spires of grass. But, sure I am, had that Dennis of Areopagus been in St. Paul's room, and supplied his rapture, he could no more have computed the number of angels, than the best arithmetician, standing upon a hill, and seeing a huge Xerxes-like army swarming in the valley, can give a just reckoning of the number of those heads.

Surely, when our Saviour speaks of more than twelve legions of angels, (Matt. xxvi. 53.) he doth not say, how many more: if those twelve, according to Jerome's (though too short) computation, amount to seventy two thousand, the more than twelve were doubtless more than many millions. He, that made them, can tell us. The Beloved disciple in Patmos, as by inspiration from that God, says, *I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;*

* Brigit. l. Revelat. iv. † Dionys. Areopag. ‡ Forner. de Cust. Angel Serm. iv.

Rev. v. 11. Now the elders were but twenty four, and the beasts were but four: all those other thousands were angels: and, if so many were about his throne, how many do we think were about his missions! Before him, the Prophet Daniel (betwixt whom and the Evangelist there is so perfect correspondence, that we may well say, Daniel was the John of the Old Testament, and John the Daniel of the New) hath made the like reckoning: *Thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him;* Dan. vii. 10. But Bildad the Shuhite, in one word says more than all, *Is there any number of his armies?* Job xxv. 3.

Lo, his armies are past all number: how much more his several soldiers! So as it may not perhaps seem hard to believe Dionysius, that the angels but of one rank are more than can be comprehended by any arithmetical number; or Gregory, who determines them numerable only to God that made them, to men innumerable.

O great God of Heaven, how doth this set forth the Infinite Majesty of thine Omnipotent Deity, to be thus attended! We judge of the magnificence of princes, according to the number and quality of their retinue and guard, and other their military powers; and yet each one of these hath an equally absolute life and being of his own, receiving only a pay from his sovereign: what shall we then think of thee, the great King of Eternal Glory, that hast before thy throne innumerable hosts of powerful and glorious spirits, of thine own making and upholding?

And how safe are we, under so many and so mighty protectors! It might be perhaps well meant, and is confessed to be seconded with much reverend antiquity, the conceit, that each man hath a special angel designed for his custody *: and, if but so, we are secure enough from all the danger of whatsoever hostile machinations; however this may seem some scanting of the bountiful provision of the Almighty, who hath pleased to express his gracious respects to one man in the allotment of many guardians: for, if Jacob speak of one angel, David speaks of more; *He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways;* Psalm xci. 11. And even those, which have thought good to abet this piece of platonic divinity concerning the single guardianship of angels, have yet yielded, that, according to several relations, each one hath many spiritual keepers. Insomuch as the forecited Fornerus †, late Bishop of Wirtzburg, durst assure his auditors, that each of them had ten angels, at least, assigned to his custody; according to the respects of their subordinate interests: besides their own person, of their family, parish, fraternity, city, diocese, country, office, church, world. Yet even this computation is niggardly and pinching ‡, since the abundant store and bounty of the Almighty can as well afford centuries as decades of guardians.

* *Cuique electo ordinariè certum propriumque angelum, qui perpetuus sit ejus custos et comes.* Zanch. de operibus creat. l. iii. c. 15. † *Ex quo facilè colligitur, ex vobis unumquemque habere plus quàm decem Angelos.* Forner. de Custod. Ang. Serm. v. p. 56. ‡ How scant then is the account of the great and

Howsoever, why should it not be all one to us: since there is no less safety in the hands of one, than many; no less care of us from many, than from one? Should but one angel guard millions of men, his power could secure them no less than a single charge; but, now that we are guarded with millions of angels, what can the gates of hell do?

But, what number soever be employed about us, sure I am, that, together with them, those, that attend the throne of their Maker, make up no less, as Nazianzen justly accounts them, than a world of spirits: a world, so much more excellent than this visible, by how much it is more abstracted from our weak senses.

O ye Blessed Spirits, ye are ever by me, ever with me, ever about me: I do as good as see you; for I know you to be here: I reverence your glorious persons; I bless God for you; I walk awfully, because I am ever in your eyes; I walk confidently, because I am ever in your hands. How should I be ashamed, that in this piece of Theology, I should be outbid by very Turks; whose priests shut up their devotions with an apprecatory mention of your presence *, as if this were the upshot of all blessings! I am sure it is that, wherein, next to my God and Saviour, I shall ever place my greatest comfort and confidence; neither hath earth or heaven any other besides, that looks like it.

SECT. IV.

THE POWER OF ANGELS.

MULTITUDES, even of the smallest and weakest creatures, have been able to produce great effects: the swarms but of flies and lice could amate the great and mighty king of Egypt; and all his forces could not free him and his peers, from so impotent adversaries. But when a multitude is seconded with Strength, how must it needs be irresistible! so it is, in these blessed spirits: even their Omnipotent Maker, who best knows what is derived from him, styles them, by his apostle, *powers;* Eph. iii. 10. Col. ii. 10: and, by his psalmist, *mighty ones in strength;* Psalm ciii. 20. A small force seems great to the weak; but that power, which is commanded by the Almighty, must needs be transcendently great.

We best judge of powerfulness, by the effects: how suddenly had one angel dispatched every firstborn in Egypt; and, after them, the hundred fourscore and five thousand of the proud Assyrian army! 2 Kings xix. 35: and, if each man had been a legion, with what ease had it been done by that potent spirit! Neither are

voluminous Abulensis, who, upon Matt. xviii. 10, determines that the Blessed Virgin had two angel-keepers: one, the most noble of the angelical order, which guarded her all her life; the other, Gabriel, an archangel of the second order, who attended her from the time of Christ's conception, until his passion! Bernard. l. vi. c. 10. As also that of Degrassalius, That the French King hath two angel-guardians: one, in regard of his private person; another, in respect to his royal dignity! Degrassal. l. 1. Jure 20. Regal. Franciæ. * Mr. Blunt's Voyage to the Levant.

they less able to preserve, than to destroy. That of Aquinas is a great word: "One angel is of such power, that he were able to govern all the corporeal creatures of the world." Justly was it exploded, as the wild heresy of Simon Magus, and his clients the Menandrians, That the Angels made the world. No; this was the sole work of him, that made them: but, if we say that it pleases God by their ministration to sway and order the marvellous affairs of this great universe, we shall not, I suppose, vary from truth. If we look to the highest part thereof, philosophers have gone so far as to teach us, that which is seconded by the allowance of some great divines, That these blessed Intelligences are they, by whose agency, under their Almighty Creator, the heavens and the glorious luminaries thereof continue their ever-constant and regular motions. And, if there fall out any preternatural immutations in the elements, any strange concussations of the earth, any direful prodigies in the sky, whither should they be imputed, but to these mighty angels; whom it pleaseth the Most High God to employ in these extraordinary services? That dreadful magnificence, which was in the delivering of the Law on Mount Sinai, in fire, smoke, thunderings, lightnings, voices, earthquakes; whence was it, but by the operation of angels? and, indeed, as they are the nearest, both in nature and place, to the Majesty of the Highest; so it is most proper for them to participate most of his power, and to exercise it in obedience to his sovereignty. As, therefore, he is that Infinite Spirit, who doth all things, and can do no more than all; so they, as his immediate subordinates, are the means whereby he executeth his illimited power, in and upon this whole created world; Joel iii. 11. Whence it is, that in their glorious appearances, they have been taken for Jehovah himself; by Hagar; by Manoah and his wife; yea, by the better eyes of the father of the faithful; Gen. xvi. 13. Judg. xiii. 22. Gen. xxii. 14.

Now, Lord, what a protection hast thou provided for thy poor worms, and not men, creeping here on thine earth! and what can we fear, in so mighty and sure hands? He, that passeth with a strong convoy through a wild and perilous desert, scorns the danger of wild beasts or robbers; no less, than if he were in a strong tower at home: so do we the onsets of the powers of darkness, while we are thus invincibly guarded.

When God promised Moses, that an angel should go before Israel; and yet, withal, threatened the subduction of his own presence; I marvel not, if the holy man were no less troubled, than if they had been left destitute and guardless; and that he ceased not his importunity, till he had won the gracious engagement of the Almighty, for his presence in that whole expedition. For, what is the greatest angel in heaven, without his Maker? But, let thy favour, O God, order and accompany the deputation of the lowest of thine angels; what can all the troops of hell hurt us? As soon may the walls of heaven be scaled, and thy throne disturbed; as he can be foiled, that is defended with thy power. Were it possible to conceive, that the Almighty should be but a looker-on in the

conflict of spirits, we know that the good angels have so much advantage of their strength, as they have of their station; neither could those subdued spirits stand in the encounter: but now, he, that is strong in our weakness, is strong in their strength for us. Blessed be God for them, as the Author of them, and their protection; blessed be they under God, as the means used by him for our protection and blessings.

SECT. V.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF ANGELS.

If Sampson could have had his full strength in his mill, when he wanted his eyes, it would have little availed him; such is power without knowledge: but where both of these concur in one, how can they fail of effect? Whether of these is more eminent in the blessed spirits, it is not easy to determine.

So perfectly Knowing are they, as that the very heathen philosophers have styled them by the name of Intelligences; as if their very being were made up of understanding. Indeed, what is there in this whole compass of the large universe, that is hid from their eyes? Only the closet of man's heart is locked up from them; as reserved solely to their Maker: yet so, as that they can, by some insensible chinks of those secret notifications which fall from us, look into them also. All other things, whether secrets of nature, or closest counsels or events, are as open to their sight, as the most visible objects are to ours.

They do not, as we mortals are wont, look through the dim and horny spectacle of senses; or understand by the mediation of phantasms: but rather, as clear mirrors, they receive at once the full representations of all intelligible things; having, besides that connatural light which is universally in them all, certain special illuminations from the Father of Lights.

Even we men think we know something; neither may our good God lose the thank of his bounty, this way: but, alas, he, that is reputed to have known most of all the heathen*, whom some † have styled the Genius of Nature, could confess, that the clearest understanding is to those things which are most manifest, but as a bat's eyes to the sun. Do we see but a worm crawling under our feet, we know not what that is, which in itself gives it a being: do we hear but a bee humming about our ears, the greatest naturalist cannot know, whether that noise come from within the body, or from the mouth, or from the wings of that fly ‡: how can we then hope or pretend, to know those things, which are abstruse and remote? But these heavenly spirits do not only know things as they are in themselves, and in their inward and immediate causes; but do clearly see the First and Universal Cause of all things, and that in his glorious essence: how much more do they know our shallow

* Arist. Metaphys. l. ii. † Bonavent. Vulcan. præf. in lib. De mundo.
‡ Lord Bacon, in his Natural Hist.

dispositions, affections, inclinations, which peer out of the windows of our hearts; together with all perils and events, that are incident unto us!

We walk, therefore, amidst not more able than watchful overseers: and so are we looked through, in all our ways, as if heaven were all eyes. Under this blessed vigilancy, if the powers of hell can either surprise us with suddenness, or circumvent us with subtlety, let them not spare to use their advantage.

But, O ye Tutelar Spirits, ye well know our weakness, and their strength; our silliness, and their craft; their deadly machinations, and our miserable obnoxiousness: neither is your love to mankind and fidelity to your Maker, any whit less than your knowledge; so as your charge can no more miscarry under your hands and eyes, than yourselves. As you do always enjoy the beatifical vision of your Maker, so your eye is never off from his little ones: your blessedness is no more separable from our safety, than you from your blessedness.

SECT. VI.

THE EMPLOYMENTS AND OPERATIONS OF ANGELS.

Even while we see you not, O ye Blessed Spirits, we know what ye do. He, that made you, hath told us your task. As there are many millions of you, attending the all-glorious throne of your Creator, and singing perpetual Hallelujahs to him in the highest heavens: so there are innumerable numbers of you employed, in governing and ordering the creature; in guarding the elect; in executing the commands, which ye receive from the Almighty.

What variety is here, of your assistance! One while, ye lead us in our way, as ye did Israel; another while, ye instruct us, as you did Daniel: one while, ye fight for us, as ye did for Joshua; another while, ye purvey for us, as for Elijah: one while, ye fit us to our holy vocation, as ye did to Isaiah; another while, ye dispose of the opportunities of our calling for good, as ye did of Philip's to the Eunuch: one while, ye foretell our danger, as to Lot, to Joseph and Mary; another while, ye comfort our affliction, as to Hagar: one while, ye oppose evil projects against us, as to Balaam; another while, ye will be striven with for a blessing, as with Jacob: one while, ye resist our offensive courses, as to Moses; Exod. iv. another while, ye encourage us in our devotions, as ye did Paul and Silas, and Cornelius: one while, ye deliver from durance, as Peter; another while, ye preserve us from danger and death, as the Three Children: one while, ye are ready to restrain our presumption, as the cherub before the gate of paradise; another while, to excite our courage, as to Elijah, and Theodosius: one while, to refresh and cheer us in our sufferings, as to the Apostles; another while, to prevent our sufferings, as to Jacob in the pursuit of Laban and Esau, to the Sages in the pursuit of Herod: one while, ye cure our bodies, as at the pool of Bethesda; another while, ye carry up our souls to glory, as ye did to Lazarus. It were endless, to instance in all the gracious offices, which ye perform.

Certainly, there are many thousand events, wherein common eyes see nothing but nature, which yet are effected by the ministration of angels. When Abraham sent his servant to procure a wife for his son, from amongst his own cognation; the messenger saw nothing but men like himself, but Abraham saw an angel forecontriving the work: *God,* saith he, *shall send his angel before thee, that thou mayest take a wife thence;* Gen. xxiv. 7. When the Israelites, forcibly, by dint of sword, expelled the Canaanites and Amorites, and the other branded nations, nothing appeared but their own arms; but the Lord of Hosts could say, *I will send mine angel before thee, by whom I shall drive them thence.* Balaam saw his ass disorderly starting in the path: he, that formerly had seen visions, now sees nothing but a wall and a way; but, in the mean time, his ass, who for the present had more of the prophet than his master, could see an angel and a sword. The Sodomites went groping in the street for Lot's door; and miss it: they thought of nothing but some sudden dizziness of brain, that disappointed them; we know it was an angel, that struck them with blindness. Nothing appeared, when the Egyptians' firstborn were struck dead in one night: the astrologers would perhaps say they were planet-struck; we know it was done by the hand of an angel. Nothing was seen at the pool of Bethesda, but a moved water, when the sudden cures were wrought: which perhaps might be attributed to some beneficial constellation; we know that an angel descended, and made the water thus sanative. Gehazi saw his master strangely preserved from the Aramite troops; but, had not his eyes been opened by the prophet's prayers, he had not seen whence that aid came.

Neither is it otherwise, in the frequent experiments of our life. Have we been raised up from deadly sicknesses, when all natural helps have given us up? God's angels have been our secret physicians. Have we had instinctive intimations of the death of some absent friends, which no human intelligence hath bidden us to suspect? who, but our angels, hath wrought it? Have we been preserved from mortal dangers, which we could not tell how by our providence to have evaded? our invisible guardians have done it.

I see no reason to dislike that observation of Gerson. "Whence is it," saith he, "that little children are conserved from so many perils of their infancy; fire, water, falls, suffocations, but by the agency of angels*?" Surely, where we find a probability of second causes in nature, we are apt to confine our thoughts from looking higher: yet, even there, many times, are unseen hands. Had we seen the house fall upon the heads of Job's children, we should perhaps have attributed it to the natural force of a vehement blast; when now we know it was the work of a spirit. Had we seen those thousands of Israel falling dead of the plague, we should have complained of some strange infection in the air; when David saw the angel of God acting in that mortality. Human reason is apt to be injuriously saucy, in ascribing those things to an ordinary course of

* *Qualiter pueri, inter tot infantiæ discrimina, &c.* Gers. Serm. de Angel.

natural causes, which the God of Nature doth by supernatural agents.

A master of philosophy, travelling with others on the way, when a fearful thunder-storm arose, checked the fear of his fellows, and discoursed to them of the natural reasons of that uproar in the clouds, and those sudden flashes wherewith they seemed, out of the ignorances of causes, to be too much affrighted: in the midst of his philosophical discourse, he was struck dead with that dreadful eruption which he slighted: what could this be, but the finger of that God, who will have his works rather entertained with wonder and trembling, than with curious scanning?

Neither is it otherwise in those violent hurricanes, devouring earthquakes, and more than ordinary tempests, and fiery apparitions, which we have seen and heard of: for, however there be natural causes given of the usual events of this kind; yet nothing hinders, but that the Almighty, for the manifestation of his power and justice, may set spirits, whether good or evil, on work to do the same things sometimes with more state and magnificence of horror. Like as we see frogs bred ordinarily, both out of putrefaction and generation; and yet, when it was, for a plague to Egypt, they were supernaturally produced: hail, an ordinary meteor; murrain of cattle, an ordinary disease; yet, for a plague to obdured Pharaoh, miraculously wrought.

Neither need there be any great difficulty, in discerning, when such like events run in a natural course, and when spirits are actors in them: the manner of their operation, the occasions and effects of them, shall soon descry them to a judicious eye: for, when we shall find, that they do manifestly deviate from the road of nature, and work above the power of secondary causes, it is easy to determine them to be of a higher efficiency. I could instance irrefragably, in several tempests and thunder-storms, which, to the unspeakable terror of the inhabitants, were seen, heard, felt, in the western parts *; wherein, the translocation and transportation of huge massy stones and irons of the churches, above the possibility of natural distance, together with the strange preservation of the persons assembled, with other accidents sensibly accompanying those astonishing works of God, still fresh in the minds of many, shewed them plainly to be wrought by a stronger hand than nature's†.

And whither else should we ascribe many events, which ignorance teacheth us to wonder at in silence? If murders be descried, by the fresh bleeding of cold and almost putrefied carcases: if a

* In the Churches of Foye Totness, and Withycomb. Of the same kind were those prodigious tempests at Milan; an. 1521. and at Mechlin; Aug. 7, an. 1527.

† Histoires Prodigieuses de P. Boaistuan, c. 8. Of the same kind was that fearful tempest, which, in the 4th year of King William Rufus, blew down 600 houses in London; and, reaving Bow Church, carried away six beams of twenty-seven foot long; and struck them into the earth, the streets being then unpaved, so deep, that only four foot remained above ground. Chron. of Sir Robert Baker, of the reign of Will. 2.

man by some strong instinct be warned to change that lodging, which he constantly held for some years; and finds his wonted sleeping place that night crushed, with the unexpected fall of an unsuspected contignation: if a man, distressed with care for the missing of an important evidence, (such a one have I known *,) shall be informed in his dream, in what hole of his dove-cote he shall find it hid: if a man, without all observation of physical criticisms, shall receive and give intelligence, many days before, what hour shall be his last: to what cause can we attribute these, but to our attending angels? If a man shall in his dream, as Marcus Aurelius Antoninus † professes, receive the prescript of the remedy of his disease, which the physicians, it seems, could not cure; whence can this be, but by the suggestion of spirits?

And, surely, since I am convinced, that their unfelt hands are in many occurrences of my life; I have learned so much wit and grace, as rather to yield them too much than too little stroke, in ordering all my concernments. O ye Blessed Spirits, many things I know ye do for me, which I discern not while yet you do them; but after they are done: and many things ye may do more, which I know not. I bless my God and yours, as the Author of all ye do: I bless you, as the means of all that is done by you for me.

SECT. VII.

THE DEGREES AND ORDERS OF ANGELS.

Heaven hath nothing in it, but perfection: but even perfection itself hath degrees. As the glorified souls, so the blessed angels, have their Heights of Excellency and Glory. He, who will be known for the God of Order, observeth, no doubt, a most exact order in his court of heaven, nearest to the residence of his Majesty. Equality hath no place, either in earth or in hell: we have no reason to seek it in heaven. He, that was rapt into the third heaven, can tell us of Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Angels, and Archangels, in that region of blessedness.

We cannot be so simple, as to think these to be but one class of spirits; doubtless, they are distinctions of divers orders: but what their several ranks, offices, employments are, he were not more wise that could tell, than he is bold that dare speak.

What modest indignation can forbear stamping at the presumption of those men, who, as if upon Domingo Gonsales his engine, they had been mounted by his Gansaes from the moon to the empyreal heaven, and admitted to be the heralds or masters of ceremonies in that higher world, have taken upon them to marshal these angelical spirits into their several rooms; proportioning their stations, dignities, services, according to the model of earthly courts; disposing them into ternions of three general hierarchies, the first relating to

* Mr. William Cook, senior, of Waltham Holy Cross.

† Marc. Aurel. Antoninus his Meditat. concerning himself. l. i. cap. 17. The like he reports of Chryses, ibid.

the immediate attendance of the Almighty, the other two to the government of the creature, both general and particular?

In the first, of assistants, placing the Seraphim as lords of the chamber; Cherubim, as lords of the cabinet-council; Thrones, the entire favourites, in whom the Almighty placeth his rest *.

In the second, of universal regency, finding Dominions to be the great officers of state, who, as counsellors, marshals, treasurers, govern the affairs of the world; Mights, to be generals of the heavenly militia; Powers, as the judges itinerant, that serve for general retributions of good and evil.

In the third, of special government, placing Principalities as rulers of several kingdoms and provinces; Archangels, as guardians to several cities and countries; and, lastly, Angels, as guardians of several persons.

And, withal, presuming to define the differences of degrees, in each order above other, in respect of the goodness and excellency of their nature †: making the Archangels no less than ten times to surpass the beauty of Angels; Principalities, twenty times above the Archangels; Powers, forty times more than Principalities; Mights, fifty more than Powers; Dominions, sixty above Mights; Thrones, seventy above Dominions; Cherubim, eighty above Thrones; Seraphim, ninety times exceeding the Cherubim.

For me, I must crave leave to wonder at this boldness; and profess myself as far to seek, whence this learning should come, as how to believe it. I do verily believe, there are divers orders of celestial spirits: I believe, they are not to be believed, that dare to determine them; especially when I see him, that was rapt into the third heaven, varying the order of their places in the several mentions of them ‡.

Neither can I trust to the revelation of that sainted prophetess § who hath ranged the degrees of the beatitude of glorified souls, into the several choirs of these heavenly hierarchies, according to their dispositions and demeanors here on earth; admitting those, who have been charitably helpful to the poor, sick, strangers, into the orb of Angels; those, who have given themselves to meditation and prayer, to the rank of Archangels; those, who have vanquished all offensive lusts in themselves, to the order of Principalities; to the height of Powers, those, whose care and vigilance hath restrained from evil and induced to good, such as have been committed to their oversight and governance; to the place of Mights, those, who, for the honour of God, have undauntedly and valiantly suffered, and whose patience hath triumphed over evils; to the company of Dominions, those, who prefer poverty to riches, and devoutly conform their wills in all things to their Maker's; to the society of Thrones, those, who do so inure themselves to the conti-

* *Ut Commensales Deo:* Forner. Ser. iv. de Cust. Ang. or, as Cassaneus, *Cubicularii et servitutes throni:* Glor. mund. 4. part. † Forner. de Custod. Ang. Serm. v. ‡ Compare Eph. i. 21. with Col. i. 16. § S. Matild. l. Revel. c. 54. citat. etiam a Forner.

nual contemplation of heavenly things, as that they have disposed their hearts to be a fit resting-place for the Almighty; to the honour of Cherubim, those, who convey the benefit of their heavenly meditations unto the souls of others; lastly, to the highest eminence of Seraphim, those, who love God with their whole heart, and their neighbour for God, and their enemies in God, and feel no wrongs but those which are done to their Maker.

I know not whether this soaring conceit be more seemingly pious, than really presumptuous, since it is evident enough, that these graces do incur into each other, and are not possible to be severed. He, that loves God, cannot chuse but be earnestly desirous to communicate his graces unto others, cannot but have his heart taken up with divine contemplation: the same man cannot but overlook earthly things, and courageously suffer for the honour of his God: shortly, he cannot but be vigilant over his own ways, and helpful unto others. Why should I presume to divide those virtues or rewards, which God will have inseparably conjoined? And what a strange confusion were this, instead of a heavenly order of remuneration! Sure I am, that the least degree, both of saints and angels, is blessedness. But, for those stairs of glory, it were too ambitious in me to desire either to climb or know them: it is enough for me, to rest in the hope, that I shall once see them: in the mean while, let me be learnedly ignorant, and incuriously devout; silently blessing the power and wisdom of my Infinite Creator, who knows how to honour himself by all these glorious and unrevealed subordinations.

SECT. VIII.

THE APPARITIONS OF ANGELS.

WERE these celestial spirits, though never so many, never so powerful, never so knowing, never so excellently glorious, mere strangers to us, what were their Number, Power, Knowledge, Glory unto us? I hear of the great riches, state, and magnificence of some remote eastern monarchs: what am I the better, while, in this distance, their port and affairs are not capable of any relation to me? To me it is all one, not to be, and not to be concerned. Let us, therefore, diligently enquire, what Mutual Communion there is or may be, betwixt these blessed spirits and us.

And, first, nothing is more plain, than that the Angels of God have not always been kept from mortal eyes, under an invisible concealment; but sometimes have condescended so low, as to manifest their presence to men in visible forms, not natural, but assumed.

I confess I have not faith enough to believe many of those apparitions, that are pretended. I could never yet know what other to think of Socrates * his Genius; which, as himself reports, was wont to check him, when he went about any unmeet enterprise;

* *Ad nutum et arbitrium sibi assistentis Dæmonis, vel declinabat negotia, vel petebat.* Minut. Fœlicis Octav.

and to forward him in good. For the modern times, it is too hard to credit the report of Doway Letters * concerning our busy neighbour Pere Cotton, that he had ordinary conference and conversation with angels, both his own tutelar and those general of provinces: if so, what need was there for him to have propounded fifty questions, partly of divinity, partly of policy, to the resolution of a demoniac? Who can be so fondly credulous, as to believe that Jo. Carera †, a young father of the Society, had a daily companion of his angel, in so familiar a fashion, as to propound his doubts to that secret friend; to receive his answers; to take his advice, upon all occasions; to be raised by him every morning from his bed, to his early devotions, till once delaying caused, for a time, an intermission? Or, that the aged Capuchin Franciscus de Bergamo, noted for the eleven precious stones which were found in his gall, had, for eight years together before his death, the assistance of an angel in human shape, for the performing of his canonical hours? Or, that the angels helped their St. Gudwal, and St. Oswald Bishop of Worcester, to say his mass? Or, that Isidore, the late Spanish peasant, newly sainted amongst good company by Gregory the fifteenth, serving a hard master, had an angel to make up his daily task at his plough, while the good soul was at his public devotions; like as another angel supplied Felix, the lay Capuchin, in tending his cattle ‡? Or, that Francisca Romana, lately canonized, had two celestial spirits, visibly attending her, the one of the order of archangels, which never left her; the other, of the fourth order of angels, who frequently presented himself to her view; their attire sometimes white, sometimes blue, purple more rarely; their tresses of hair, long and golden, as the over-credulous Bishop of Wirtzburg reports from Gulielmus Baldesanus, not without many improbable circumstances.

These, and a thousand more of the same brain, find no more belief with me, than that story, which Franciscus Albertinus relates out of Baronius, as done here at home; that in the year 1601, in England, there was an angel seen upon one of our altars, (and therefore more likely to be known in our own island, than beyond the Alps) in a visible form, with a naked sword in his hand, which he glitteringly brandished up and down; foyning sometimes, and sometimes striking; thereby threatening, so long ago, an instant destruction to this kingdom. And, indeed, why should we yield more credit to these pretenders of apparitions, than to Adelbertus the German heresiarch, condemned in a council of Rome, by Pope Zachary, who gave no less confidently out, that his angel-guardian appeared daily to him, and imparted to him many divine revelations and directions? or, if there be a difference pleaded in the relations, where or how shall we find it?

This we know, that so sure as we see men, so sure we are that holy men have seen angels. Abraham saw angels, in his tent-door:

* Duac. 18. Feb. 1627. ex literis Pet. Rav. † Forn. Ser. v. ‡ Ignat. Loiol. Xavier. Theresia. Isidor. Philippus. Nerius. 4. Id. Martii. anno 1602.

Lot saw angels, in the gate of Sodom; Hagar, in the wilderness of Beersheba; Jacob, in the way; Moses, in the bush of Horeb; Manoah and his wife, in the field; Gideon, in his threshing-floor; David, by the threshing-floor of Araunah. What should I mention the Prophets Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Daniel, Zechariah, Ezekiel, and the rest? In the New Testament, Joseph, Mary, Zachariah the father of John Baptist, the Shepherds, Mary Magdalen, the gazing Disciples at the Mount of Olives, Peter, Philip, Cornelius, Paul, John the Evangelist, were all blessed with the sight of angels.

In the succeeding times of the Church Primitive, I dare believe, that good angels were no whit more sparing of their presence, for the comfort of holy Martyrs and Confessors, under the pressure of tyranny for the dear Name of their Saviour. I doubt not, but constant Theodorus saw and felt the refreshing hand of the angel, no less than he reported to Julian his persecutor*. I doubt not, but the holy virgins, Theophila, Agnes, Lucia, Cecilia, and others, saw the good angels protectors of their chastity. As one, that hath learned in these cases to take the mid way betwixt distrust and credulity, I can easily yield, that those retired Saints of the prime ages of the Church had sometimes such heavenly companions, for the consolation of their forced solitude.

But, withal, I must have leave to hold, that the older the Church grew, the more rare was the use of these apparitions, as of other miraculous actions and events: not that the arm of our God is shortened, or his care and love to his beloved ones any whit abated; but, for that his Church is now, in this long process of time, settled, through his gracious providence, in an ordinary way. Like as it was with the Israelites, who, while they were in their longsome passage, were miraculously preserved and protected; but, when they came once to be fixed in the land of promise, their angelical sustenance ceased: they then must purvey for their own food; and either till, or famish.

Now then, in these latter ages of the Church, to have the visible apparition of a good angel, it is a thing so geason and uncouth, that it is enough for all the world to wonder at.

Some few instances our times have been known to yield. Amongst others, that is memorable, which Phil. Melanchton, as an eye-witness, reports. Simon Grynæus, a learned and holy man, coming from Heidelburg to Spire, was desirous to hear a certain preacher in that city; who in his sermon, it seems, did then let fall some erroneous propositions of popish doctrine, much derogatory from the majesty and truth of the Son of God: wherewith Grynæus, being not a little offended, craved speedy conference with the preacher; and, laying before him the falsehood and danger of his doctrines, exhorted him to an abandoning and retraction of those misopinions. The preacher gave good words and a fair semblance to Grynæus; desirous of further and more particular conference with him; each imparting to other their names and lodgings: yet inwardly, as being stung with that just reproof, he resolved a re-

* Theod. l. iii. c. 11.

venge, by procuring the imprisonment; and, if he might, the death of so sharp a censurer. Grynæus, misdoubting nothing upon his return to his lodging, reports the passages of the late conference, to those, who sat at the table with him; amongst whom, Melanchton being one, was called out of the room to speak with a stranger, newly come into the house: going forth accordingly, he finds a grave old man of a goodly countenance, seemly and richly attired; who, in a friendly and grave manner, tells him, that within one hour, there would come to their inn certain officers, as from the King of the Romans to attach Grynæus, and to carry him to prison; willing him to charge Grynæus, with all possible speed to flee out of Spires; and requiring Melanchton to see that this advantage were not neglected: which said, the old man vanished out of his sight. Instantly Melanchton, returning to his companions, recounted unto them the words of this strange monitor, and hastened the departure of Grynæus accordingly; who had no sooner boated himself on the Rhine, than he was eagerly searched for at his said lodging. That worthy divine, in his Commentary upon Daniel, both relates the story, and acknowledges God's fatherly providence in sending this angel of his for the rescue of his faithful servant. Others, though not many of this kind, are reported by Simon Goulartius, in his collection of admirable and memorable histories of our time: whither for brevity sake, I refer my reader*.

But, more often hath it fallen out, that evil spirits have visibly presented themselves, in the glorious forms of good angels; as to Simeon Stylites, to Pachomius, to Valens the Monk, to Rathodus Duke of Freezland, to Macarius, to Gertrude in Westphalia, with many others; as we find in the report sof Ruffinus, Vincentius, Cæsarius, Palladius: and the like delusions may still be set on foot, while Satan, who loves to transform himself into an angel of light, laboureth by these means to nurse silly souls in superstition: too many whereof have swallowed the bait, though others have descried the hook. Amongst the rest, I like well the humility of that hermit, into whose cell when the Devil presented himself, in a goodly and glittering form, and told him that he was an angel sent to him from God; the hermit turned him off with this plain answer, "See thou whence thou comest: for me, I am not worthy to be visited with such a guest as an angel †."

But the trade, that we have with good spirits, is not now driven by the eye; but is like to themselves, spiritual: yet not so, but that even in bodily occasions, we have many times insensible helps from them in such manner, as that by the effects, we can boldly say, Here hath been an angel, though we saw him not.

Of this kind, was that, no less than miraculous, cure, which, at St. Maderne's‡, in Cornwall, was wrought upon a poor cripple ‖; whereof, besides the attestation of many hundreds of the neigh-

* Goulart. Histoir memor. ex Melanct. in Dan. c. 20. † Bromiard. Sum. prædicant. v. Humilitas. ‡ S. Maternus. ‖ One John Trelille.

bours, I took a strict and personal examination, in that last Visitation* which I either did or ever shall hold. This man, that, for sixteen years together, was fain to walk upon his hands, by reason of the close contraction of the sinews of his legs, was, upon three monitions in his dream to wash in that well, suddenly so restored to his limbs, that I saw him able, both to walk, and to get his own maintenance. I found here was neither art, nor collusion; the thing done, the Author invisible. The like may we say of John Spangenberg, Pastor of Northeuse†: no sooner was that man stept out of his house, with his family, to go to the Baynes, than the house fell right down in the place. Our own experience, at home, is able to furnish us with divers such instances. How many have we known, that have fallen from very high towers, and into deep pits, past the natural possibility of hope, who yet have been preserved not from death only, but from hurt! Whence could these things be, but by the secret aid of those invisible helpers? It were easy to fill volumes with particulars of these kinds. But the main care and most officious endeavours of these blessed spirits, are employed about the better part, the Soul: in the instilling of good motions; enlightening the understanding; repelling of temptations; furthering our opportunities of good; preventing occasions of sin; comforting our sorrows; quickening our dulness; encouraging our weakness; and, lastly, after all careful attendance here below, conveying the souls of their charge to their glory, and presenting them to the hands of their faithful Creator.

It is somewhat too hard to believe, that there have been ocular witnesses of these happy convoys. Who lists, may credit that, which Jerome tells us, that Anthony the hermit saw the soul of his partner in that solitude (Paul) carried up by them to heaven; that Severinus, Bishop of Colein, saw the soul of St. Martin thus transported, as Gregory reports in his Dialogues; that Benedict saw the soul of Germanus, in the form of a fiery globe, thus conveyed. What should I speak of the souls of the holy martyrs, Tiburtius, Valerian, Maximus, Marcellinus, Justus, Quintinus, Severus, and others? we may if we please, we need not unless we list, give way to these reports; to which our faith obliges us not: in these cases, we go not by eye-sight: but we are well assured the soul of Lazarus was, by these glorious spirits, carried up into the bosom of Abraham; neither was this any privilege of his, above all other the Saints of God; all which, as they land in one common harbour of blessedness, so they all participate of one happy means of portage.

SECT. IX.

THE RESPECTS WHICH WE OWE TO THE ANGELS.

Such are the respects of good angels to us: now what are ours to them?

It was not amiss said of one, that the life of angels is political; full of intercourse with themselves and with us. What they re-

* At Whitsuntide. † Sim. Goular. ex J. Manlio.

turn to each other in the course of their Theophanies, is not for us to determine; but, since their good offices are thus assiduous unto us, it is meet we do enquire what Duties are requirable from Us to Them.

Devout Bernard is but too liberal in his decision, that we owe to these beneficent spirits reverence for their presence, devotion for their love, and trust for their custody*. Doubtless, we ought to be willing to give unto them so much, as they will be willing to take from us: if we go beyond these bounds, we offend and alienate them: to derogate from them is not so heinous in their account, as to over-honour them. St. John proffers an humble geniculation to the angel, and is put off, with a *See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant;* Rev. xix. 10. The excesses of respects to them, have turned to abominable impiety: which howsoever Jerome seems to impute to the Jews, ever since the Prophets' time†; yet Simon Magus was the first, that we find guilty of this impious flattery of the angels; who, fondly holding that the world was made by them, could not think fit to present them with less than divine honour. His cursed scholar, Menander, whose error Prateolus wrongfully fathers upon Aristotle, succeeding him in that wicked heresy, as Eusebius tells us, left behind him Saturnius, not inferior to him in this frenzy; who, as Tertullian and Philastrius report him, fancied, together with his mad fellows, that seven angels made the world, not acquainting God with their work. What should I name blasphemous Cerinthus, who durst disparage Christ in comparison with angels? Not altogether so bad were those heretics‡, though bad enough, which took their ancient denomination from the angels: who, professing true Christianity and detestation of idolatry, as having learned that God only is to be worshipped properly; yet reserved a certain kind of adoration to the blessed angels §. Against this opinion and practice, the great Doctor of the Gentiles seems to bend his style, in his Epistle to the Colossians, forbidding a voluntary humility in worshipping of angels: whether grounded upon the superstition of ancient Jews, as Jerome and Anselm; or, upon the ethnic philosophy of some Platonic, as Estius and Cornelius à Lapide imagine; or, upon the damnable conceits of the Simonians and Cerinthians, as Tertullian; we need not much to enquire: nothing is more clear, than the Apostle's inhibition; afterward seconded by the Synod of Laodicea. Whereto yet Theodoret's‖ noted Commentary would seem to give more light; who tells us, that upon the ill use made of the giving of the Law by the hands of angels, there was an error of old maintained, of angel worship, which still continued in Phrygia and Pisidia: so that a Synod was hercupon assembled at Laodicea, the chief city of Phrygia, which, by a direct canon, forbad praying to angels; a practice, saith he, so settled amongst them, that

* Bern. in Psal. *Qui habitat.* † Hieron. quest. 10. ad Algasiam. ‡ Angelici. § Prateolus Elench. v. Angelici. ‖ *Rejecta expositio à pontificiis, ut non modò periculosa sed et falsa.* Vid. Binium in notis in Pium Pap. in Tom. i. pag. 103.

even to this day there are to be seen amongst them and their neighbours, the Oratories of St. Michael. Here, then, was this mishumility, that they thought it too much boldness, to come immediately to God; but that we must first make way to his favour, by the mediation of angels: a testimony so pregnant, that I wonder not if Caranza flee into corners, and all the fautors of angel-worship be driven to hard* shifts to avoid it.

But what do I with controversies? This devotion we do gladly profess to owe to good angels, that though we do not pray unto them, yet we do pray to God for the favour of their assistance and protection; and praise God for the protection, that we have from them. That faithful Patriarch, of whom the whole Church of God receives denomination, knew well what he said, when he gave this blessing to his grandchildren: *The angel, that redeemed me from all evil, bless the children;* Gen. xlviii. 19: whether this were an interpretative kind of imploration, as Becanus and Lorichius contend; or, whether, as is no less probable, this angel were not any created power, but the great Angel of the Covenant, the same which Jacob wrestled with before for a blessing upon himself, as Athanasius and Cyril well conceive it; I will not here dispute: sure I am, that if it were an implicit prayer, and the angel mentioned, a creature; yet the intention was no other, than to terminate that prayer in God, who blesseth us by his angel.

Yet, further: we come short of our duty to these blessed spirits, if we entertain not in our hearts a high and venerable conceit of their wonderful majesty, glory, and greatness; and an awful acknowledgment and reverential awe of their presence; a holy joy and confident assurance of their care and protection; and, lastly, a fear to do ought, that might cause them to turn away their faces, in dislike, from us. All these dispositions are copulative: for certainly, if we have conceived so high an opinion of their excellency and goodness as we ought, we cannot but be bold upon their mutual interest, and be afraid to displease them. Nothing in the world, but our sins, can distaste them: they look upon our natural infirmities, deformities, loathsomeness, without any offence or nauseation; but our spiritual indispositions are odious to them, as those which are opposite to their pure natures. The story† is famous of the Angel and the Hermit, walking together: in the way there lay an ill-scented and poisonous carrion: the hermit stopt his nose, and turned away his head, hasting out of that offensive air; the angel held on his pace, without any shew of dislike: straightway they met with a proud man, gaily dressed, strongly perfumed, looking high, walking stately; the angel turned away his head and stopt his nostrils, (while the hermit passed on not without reverence to so great a person,) and gave this reason, that the stench of pride was more loathsome to God and his Angels, than that of the carcase could be to him."

* Reading it *angulos* instead of *angelos*. † Jo. Bromiar. Sum. prædic. v. Superbia.

I blush to think, O ye Glorious Spirits, how often I have done that whereof ye have been ashamed for me. I abhor myself to recount your just dislikes; and do willingly profess, how unworthy I shall be of such friends, if I be not hereafter jealous of your just offence. Neither can I, without much regret, think of those many and horrible nuisances, which you find every moment from sinful mankind. Woe is me, what odious scents arise to you perpetually from those bloody murders, beastly uncleannesses, cruel oppressions, noisome disgorgings of surfeits and drunkennesses, abominable idolatries, and all manner of detestable wickednesses, presumptuously committed every where; enough to make you abhor the presence and protection of debauched and deplored mortality!

But, for us, that are better principled, and know what it is to be overlooked by holy and glorious spirits, we desire and care to be more tender of your offence, than of a world of visible spectators: and, if the Apostle found it requisite to give such charge, for but the observation of an outward decency, not much beyond the lists of indifferency, *because of the angels;* 1 Cor. xi. 10: what should our care be, in relation to those blessed spirits, of our deportment in matter of morality and religion! Surely, O ye Invisible Guardians, it is not my sense, that shall make the difference: it shall be my desire to be no less careful of displeasing you, than if I saw you present by me, clothed in flesh: neither shall I rest less assured of your gracious presence and tuition, and the expectation of all spiritual offices from you, which may tend towards my blessedness, than I am now sensible of the animation of my own soul.

THE

INVISIBLE WORLD.

THE SECOND BOOK:—OF THE SOULS OF MEN.

SECT. I.

OF THEIR SEPARATION AND IMMORTALITY.

NEXT to these angelical essences, the Souls of Men, whether in the body or severed from it, are those spirits, which people the invisible world: next to them, I say; not the same with them, not better. Those of the ancients, which have thought that the ruin of angels is to be supplied by blessed souls, spake doubtless without the book: for he, that is the Truth itself, hath said, they be ἰσάγγελοι, *like;* not the same. And justly are those exploded, whether Pythagoreans, or Stoics, or Gnostics, or Manichees, or Almaricus, or, if Lactantius himself were in that error as Ludovicus Vives construes him, who falsely dreamed, that the souls of men were of the substance of that God, which inspired them: these errors are more fit for hellebore, than for theological conviction. Spiritual substances, doubtless, they are; and such, as have no less distant original from the body, than heaven is from earth. Galen was not a better physician than an ill divine, while he determines the soul to be the complexion and temperament of the prime qualities: no other than that harmony, which the elder naturalists dreamed of; an opinion no less brutish, than such a soul: for how can temperament be the cause of any progressive motion; much less of a rational discourse? Here is no materiality, no physical composition, in this inmate of ours: nothing, but a substantial act, an active spirit, a spiritual form of the king of all visible creatures.

But as for the essence, original derivation, powers, faculties, operations of this human soul as it is lodged in this clay, I leave them to the disquisition of the great secretaries of nature: my way lies higher, leading me from the common consideration of this spirit, as it is clogged with flesh, unto the meditation of it, as it is Divested of this Earthly Case, and Clothed with an Eternity, whether of joy or torment.

We will begin with happiness, our fruition whereof, I hope, shall never end; if first we shall have spent some thoughts, upon the general condition of this separation.

That the soul, after separation from the body, hath an independent life of its own, is so clear a truth, that the very heathen phi-

losophers, by the dim light of nature, have determined it for irrefragable: insomuch as Aristotle himself, who is wont to hear ill for his opinion of the soul's mortality, is confidently reported to have written a book of the Soul Separate; which Thomas Aquinas, in his so late age, professes to have seen. Sure I am, that his master Plato, and that heathen martyr Socrates, related by him, are full of divine discourses of this kind: insomuch as this latter, when Crito was asking him how he would be buried; "I perceive," said he, "I have lost much labour; for I have not yet persuaded my Crito, that I shall fly clear away, and leave nothing behind me:" meaning, that the soul is the man; and would be ever itself, when his body should have no being. And in Xenophon, as Cicero* cites him, Cyrus is brought in saying thus, *Nolite arbitrari, &c.* "Think not, my dear sons, that when I shall depart from you, I shall then cease to have any being: for, even while I was with you, ye saw not that soul, which I had; but yet ye well saw, by those things which I did, that there was a soul within this body: believe ye, therefore, that though ye shall see no soul of mine, yet that it still shall have a being." Shortly, all, but a hateful Epicurus, have astipulated to this truth: and if some have fancied a transmigration of souls into other bodies; others, a passage to the stars, which formerly governed them; others, to I know not what Elysian fields; all have pitched upon a separate condition.

And, indeed, not divinity only, but true natural reason will necessarily evince it: for the intellective soul, being a more spiritual substance, and therefore having in it no composition at all, and, by consequence, nothing that may tend towards a not-being, can be no other, supposing the will and concurrence of the Infinite Creator, than immortal. Besides, as our best way of judging ought is wont to be by the effects; certainly, all operations are from the forms of things, and all things do so work as they are. Now the body can do nothing at all, without the help of the soul; but the soul hath actions of its own †: as the acts of understanding, thinking, judging, remembering, ratiocination; whereof, if, while it is within us, it receives the first occasions by our senses and phantasms; yet it doth perfect and accomplish the said operations, by the inward powers of its own faculties: much more, and also more exactly can it do all these things, when it is merely itself; since the clog, that the body brings with it, cannot but pregravate and trouble the soul in all her performances. In the mean time, they do justly pass for mental actions; neither do so much as receive a denomination from the body: we walk, move, speak, see, feel, and do other human acts; the power, that doth them, is from the soul; the means or instrument, whereby they are done, is the body: no man will say the soul walks or sees, but the body by it; but we can no more say that the soul understands or thinks

* Cicero de Senectute. † *Quicquid est illud quod sentit, quod sapit, quod vult, quod viget, cœleste et divinum est, ob eamque rem æternum sit necesse est.* Tull. Tusc. quæst. l. 1.

by the aid of the body, than we can say the body thinks or understands by means of the soul. These, therefore, being distinct and proper actions, do necessarily evince an independing and self-subsisting agent. O my soul, thou couldst not be thyself, unless thou knewest thine original, heavenly; thine essence, separable; thy continuance, eviternal.

But, what do we call in reason and nature to this parle, where faith, by which Christianity teacheth us to be regulated, finds so full and pregnant demonstrations? No less than half our Creed sounds this way, either by expression or inference; wherein, while we profess to believe our Saviour rose from the dead and ascended, we imply that his body was not more dead, than his soul living and active: that was it, whereof he said, *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.* Now, we cannot imagine one life of the head, and another of the body: his state, therefore, is ours: every way, are we conform to him: as our bodies shall be then once like to his, glorious; so our souls cannot be but as his, severed by death, crowned with immortality. And if he shall come to judge both the quick and the dead; those dead, whom he shall judge, must be living: for, as our Saviour said in the like case, God is not the Judge of the dead, as dead; but the Judge of the living, that were dead, and therefore living in death and after death. And whereof doth the Church Catholic consist, but of some members, warfaring on earth; others, triumphant in heaven? and what doth that triumph suppose, but both a being, and a being glorious? What Communion were there of Saints, if the departed souls were not; and the soul, when it begins to be perfect, should cease to be? To what purpose were the resurrection of the body, but to meet with his old partner, the soul?—and that meeting only, implies both a separation and existence. Lastly, what life can there be properly, but of the soul? and how can that life be everlasting, which is not continued? or that continued, that is not? If then he may be a man, certainly a Christian he cannot be, who is more assured, that he hath a soul in his body, than that his soul shall once have a being without his body. Death may tyrannize over our earthly parts: the worst he can do to the spiritual, is, to free it from a friendly bondage.

Cheer up thyself, therefore, O my soul, against all the fears of thy dissolution: thy departure is not more certain, than thy advantage: thy being shall not be less sure, but more free and absolute. Is it such a trouble to thee, to be rid of a clog? or, art thou so loth to take leave of a miserable companion, for a while; on condition, that he shall, ere long, meet thee happy?

SECT. II.

OF THE INSTANT VISION OF GOD, UPON THE EGRESSION OF THE SOUL; AND THE PRESENT CONDITION, TILL THEN.

But if, in the mean while, we shall let fall our eyes upon the Present Condition of the Soul, it will appear how apt we are to misknow ourselves, and that which gives us the being of men.

The most men, however they conceive they have a soul within them, by which they receive their animation: yet they entertain but dull and gloomy thoughts concerning it; as if it were no less void of light and activity, than it is of materiality and shape: not apprehending the spiritual agility and clearly-lightsome nature of that, whereby they are enlived.

Wherein it will not a little avail us, to have our judgments throughly rectified; and to know, that as God is light, so the soul of man, which comes immediately from him and bears his image, is justly, even here, dignified with that glorious title.

I speak not only of the regenerate soul, illuminated by divine inspirations and supernatural knowledge; but also even of that rational soul, which every man bears in his bosom*. *The spirit of man*, saith wise Solomon, *is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly*; Prov. xx. 27: and the dear Apostle, *In him was life, and the life was the light of men*; John i. 4: and more fully soon after, *That light was the true light, that lightneth every man, that cometh into the world*; v. 9. No man can be so fondly charitable, as to think every man, that comes into the world, enlightened by the Spirit of Regeneration. It is, then, that intellectual light of common nature †, which the great Illuminator of the World beams forth into every soul; in such proportion, as he finds agreeable to the capacity of every subject.

Know thyself, therefore, O man; and know thy Maker. God hath not put into thee a dark soul; or shut up thy inward powers, in a dungeon of comfortless obscurity: but he hath set up a bright shining lamp in thy breast; whereby thou mayst sufficiently discern natural and moral truths, the principles and conclusions whether of nature or art; herein advancing thee above all other visible creatures, whom he hath confined, at the best, to a mere opacity of outward and common sense. But if our natural light shall, through the blessing of God, be so happily improved, as freely to give place to the spiritual, reason to faith; so that the soul can now attain to see him that is invisible, and in his light to see light; Psalm xxxvi. 9: now, even while it is over-shaded with the interposition of this earth, it is already entered within the verge of glory: but, so soon as this veil of wretched mortality is done away; now, it enjoys a clear heaven for ever, and sees as it is seen.

Amongst many heavenly thoughts, wherewith my ever-dear, and most honoured, and now blessed friend, the late Edward Earl of Norwich, had wont to animate himself against the encounter with our last enemy death; this was one, not of the meanest, that in the very instant of his soul's departing out of his body, it should

* *Lumen aliquod substantiale animas habere haud improbè videmur advertere, quando in Evangelio legitur, quòd illuminat omnem hominem venientem in mundum: deinde, quòd in cogitatione positi nescio quid tenue, volubile, clarum in nobis inesse sentimus, quod respicit sine sole, quod videt sine extraneo lumine: nam si ipsum in se lucidum non esset, rerum tantam conspicientiam non haberet: tenebrosis ista non sunt data; omnia cæca torpescunt.* Cassidor. de Animâ, c. 10. † Calvin in loc.

immediately enjoy the vision of God. And, certainly, so it is. The spirits of just men need not stand upon distances of place, or space of time, for this beatifical sight; but, so soon as ever they are out of their clay lodging, they are in their spiritual heaven, even while they are happily conveyed to the local; 2 Cor. v. 1: for, since nothing hindered them from that happy sight, but the interposition of this earth which we carry about us, the spirit, being once free from that impediment, sees as it is seen; being instantly passed into a condition like unto the angels. Well, therefore, are these coupled together by the blessed Apostle, who, in his divine rapture, had seen them both: *ye are come*, saith he, *unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of just men made perfect*; Heb. xii. 22. As, then, the angels of God, wheresoever they are, though employed about the affairs of this lower world, yet do still see and enjoy the vision of God; so do the souls of the righteous, when they are once eased of this earthly load.

Doubtless, as they passed through degrees of grace, while they took up with these homely lodgings of clay; so they may pass through degrees of bliss, when they are once severed. And if, as some great divines* have supposed, the Angels themselves shall receive an augmentation of happiness at the day of the last judgment, when they shall be freed from all charge and employments; since their perfection of blessedness consists in rest, which is the end of all motion: how much more shall the Saints of God then receive an enlargement of their felicity! but, in the mean time, they are entered into the lists of their essential beatitude, over the threshold of their heaven.

How full and comfortable is that profession of the great Apostle, who, when he had sweetly diverted the thoughts of himself and his Corinthians, from their light afflictions to an eternal weight of excelling glory; from things temporal, which are seen, to those everlasting, which are not seen; adds, *For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building, not made with hands, eternal in the heaven*, 2 Cor. v. 1: more than implying, that our eye is no sooner off from the temporal things, than it is taken up with eternal objects; and that the instant of the dissolution of these clay cottages, is the livery and seisin of a glorious and everlasting mansion in heaven.

Canst thou believe this, O my soul, and yet recoil at the thought of thy departure? Wert thou appointed, after a dolorous dissolution, to spend some hundreds of years at the fore-gates of glory, though in a painless expectation of a late happiness; even this hope were a pain alone: but, if sense of pain were also added to the delay, this were more than enough to make the condition justly dreadful: But, now that one minute shuts our eyes and opens them to a clear sight of God, determines our misery and

* Bp. Andrews in his answer to Bellarmine.

begins our blessedness; oh the cowardice of our unbelief, if we shrink at so momentary a purchase of eternity! How many have we known, that, for a false reputation of honour, have rushed into the jaws of death, when we are sure they could not come back to enjoy it; and do I tremble at a minute's pain, that shall feoff me in that glory, which I cannot but for ever enjoy? How am I ashamed to hear a heathen Socrates, encouraging himself against the fears of death, from his resolution of meeting with some famous persons in that other world; and to feel myself shrugging at a short brunt of pain, that shall put me into the bliss-making presence of the all-glorious God, into the sight of the glorified Humanity of my Dear Redeemer, into the society of all the Angels and Saints of Heaven!

SECT. III.

OF THE SOUL'S PERPETUAL VIGILANCY, AND FRUITION OF GOD.

It is no other than a frantic dream of those erroneous spirits, that have fancied the Sleep of the Soul; and that, so long and deep a sleep, as from the evening of the dissolution, till the morning of the resurrection: so as, all that while, the soul hath no vision of God, no touch of joy or pain. An error, wickedly raked up out of the ashes of those Arabic heretics, whom Origen is said to have reclaimed: and, since that time, taken up, if they be not slandered, by the Armenians and Fratricelli; and once countenanced and abetted by Pope John the XXIId. as Pope Adrian witnesseth; yea, so enforced by him upon the University of Paris, as that all access to degrees was barred unto any whosoever refused to subscribe and swear to that damnable position.

The Minorites began to find relish in that poison; which, no doubt, had proceeded to further mischief, had not the interposition of Philip, the then French king, happily quelled that uncomfortable and pernicious doctrine, so as we might hoped it should never have dared more to look into the light.

But, woe is me, these prodigious times, amongst a world of other uncouth heresies, have not stuck to fetch even this also back from the region of darkness, whither it was sent.

Indeed, who can but wonder that any Christian can possibly give entertainment to so absurd a thought; while he hears his Saviour say, *Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me, where I am;* and *that*, not in a safe sleep, *they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me;* John xvii. 24. Behold it? yea, but when? at last perhaps, when the body shall be resumed? Nay, to choke this cavil, the bliss is present, even already possessed: *The glory, which thou gavest me, I have given to them;* v. 22. It was accordingly his gracious word to the penitent thief, *This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*

How clear is that of the Chosen Vessel, opposing our present condition to the succeeding; *For now we see through a glass darkly; but then*, that is, upon our dissolution, *face to face*, 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

the face of the soul to the face of God! the infinite amiableness whereof was that, which inflamed the longing desire of the blessed Apostle to depart and to be with Christ; as knowing these two inseparable, the instant of his departure, and his presence with Christ: else, the departure were no less worthy of fear, as the utmost of evils; than now it is of wishing for, as our entrance into blessedness.

Away, then, with that impious frenzy of the soul's, whether mortality or sleep in death. No, my soul, thou dost then begin to live: thou dost not awake, till then. Now, while thou art in the bed of this living clay, thine eyes are shut; thy spiritual senses are tied up; thou art apt to snort, in a sinful security; thou dreamest of earthly vanities: then, only then, are thine eyes opened, thy spiritual faculties freed, all thy powers quickened, and thou art perpetually presented with objects of eternal glory. And, if at any time during this pilgrimage, thine eye-lids have been some little raised by divine meditations; yet, how narrowly, how dimly art thou wont to see! now, thine eyes shall be so broadly and fully opened, that thou shalt see whole heaven at once; yea, which is more, the face of that God, whose presence makes it heaven.

O glorious sight! O most blessed condition! Wise Solomon could truly observe, that the eye is not satisfied with seeing; neither indeed can it be here below. Nothing is so great a glutton as the eye: for, when we have seen all that we can, we shall still wish to see more; and that more is nothing, if it be less than all. But this Infinite Object, which is more than all, shall so fill and satisfy our eyes, that we cannot desire the sight of any other; nor ever be glutted with the sight of this. Old Simeon, when once he had lived to see the Lord of Life clothed in flesh, could say, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* If he were so full of the sight of his Saviour, in the weakness of human flesh, and in the form of a servant: how is he more than sated with the perfection of joy and heavenly detestation, to see the Saviour clothed with majesty; to see his all-glorious Godhead; and so to see, as to enjoy them; and so enjoy them, as that he shall never intermit their sight and fruition to all eternity.

SECT. IV.

OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE GLORIFIED.

As concerning all other matters, what the Knowledge is of our souls, separated and glorified, we shall then know when ours come to be such: in the mean time, we can much less know their thoughts, than they can know ours. Sure we are, they do not know in such manner as they did, when they were in our bosoms; by help of senses and phantasms, by the discursive inferences of ratiocination: but that they are elevated to a condition suitable to the blessed angels, so that they know like them: though not by the means of a natural knowledge, as they; yet by that super-

natural light of intimation, which they receive by their glorified estate.

Whether by virtue of this divine illumination, they know the particular occurrences, which we meet with here below; he were bold, that would determine: only this, we may confidently affirm, that they do clearly know all those things, which do any way appertain to their estate of blessedness.

Amongst which, whether the knowledge of each other in that region of happiness may justly be ranked, is not unworthy of our disquisition.

Doubtless, as in God there is all perfection eminently and transcendently; so, in the sight and fruition of God, there cannot be but full and absolute felicity: yet this is so far from excluding the knowledge of those things which derive their goodness and excellency from him, as that it compriseth and supposeth it. Like as it is also, in our affections: we love God only, as the chief good; yet so, as that we love other things, in order to God. Charity is no more subject to loss, than knowledge: both these shall accompany our souls to, and in, that other world. As then, we shall perfectly love God, and his Saints in him; so shall we know both: and, though it be a sufficient motive of our love in heaven, that we know them to be Saints; yet it seems to be no small addition to our happiness, to know that those Saints were once ours. And, if it be a just joy to a parent here on earth to see his child gracious, how much more accession shall it be to his joy above, to see the fruits of his loins glorious; when both his love is more pure, and their improvement absolute! Can we make any doubt, that the blessed angels know each other? How senseless were it, to grant that no knowledge is hid from them, but of themselves! Or, can we imagine that those angelical spirits do not take special notice of those souls, which they have guarded here, and conducted to their glory? If they do so, and if the knowledge of our beatified souls shall be like to theirs, why should we abridge our souls more than them, of the comfort of our interknowing? Surely, our dissolution shall abate nothing of our natural faculties; our glory shall advance them, so as what we once knew we shall know better: and, if our souls can then perfectly know themselves, why should they be denied the knowledge of others?

Doubt not then, O my soul, but thou shalt once see, besides the face of thy God whose glory fills heaven and earth, the blessed spirits of the ancient Patriarchs and Prophets; the holy Apostles and Evangelists; the glorious Martyrs and Confessors; those eminent Saints, whose holiness thou wert wont to magnify; and, amongst them, those in whom nature and grace have especially interested thee: thou shalt see them; and enjoy their joy, and they thine. How oft have I measured a long and foul journey, to see some good friend; and digested the tediousness of the way, with the expectation of a kind entertainment, and the thought of that complacency which I should take in so dear a presence! and yet, perhaps, when I have arrived, I have found the house disor-

dered, one sick, another disquieted, myself indisposed: with what cheerful resolution should I undertake this my last voyage, where I shall meet with my best friends, and find them perfectly happy, and myself with them!

SECT. V.

OF THE GLORY OF HEAVEN ENJOYED BY BLESSED SOULS.

How often have I begged of my God, that it would please him to shew me some little glimpse of the Glory of his Saints! It is not for me, to wish the sight, as yet, of the face of that Divine Majesty: this was too much, for a Moses to sue for: my ambition only is, that I might, if but as it were through some cranny or key-hole of the gate of heaven, see the happy condition of his glorious servants.

I know what hinders me; my miserable unworthiness, my spiritual blindness. O God, if thou please to wash off my clay with the waters of thy Siloam, I shall have eyes: and, if thou anoint them with thy precious eye-salve, those eyes shall be clear; and enabled to behold those glories, which shall ravish my soul.

And now, Lord, what pure and resplendent light is this, wherein thy blessed ones dwell! How justly did thine ecstatical Apostle call it *the inheritance of the Saints in light!* Col. i. 12: light unexpressible, light unconceivable, light inaccessible! Lo, thou, that hast prepared such a light to this inferior world, for the use and comfort of us mortal creatures, as the glorious sun, which can both enlighten and dazzle the eyes of all beholders; hast proportionally ordained a light to that higher world, so much more excellent than the sun, as heaven is above earth, immortality above corruption. And, if wise Solomon could say, *Truly the light is sweet; and a pleasant thing it is, for the eyes to see the sun;* Eccl. xi. 7: how infinitely delectable is it, in thy light to see such light, as may make the sun, in comparison thereof, darkness! *In thy presence is the fulness of joy, and at thy right-hand are pleasures for evermore.* What can be wished more, where there is fulness of joy? and, behold, thy presence, O Lord, yields it.

Could I neither see saint nor angel in that whole imperial heaven, none but thine Infinite Self, Thyself alone were happiness for me more than enough. But, as thou, in whom, here below, we live, and move, and have our being, detractest nothing from thine all-sufficiency; but addest rather to the praise of thy bounty, in that thou furnishest us with variety of means of our life and subsistence: so here, it is the praise of thy wonderful mercies, which thou allowest us, besides thine immediate presence, the society of thy blessed angels and saints, wherein we may also enjoy thee.

And, if the view of any of those single glories be enough to fill my soul with wonder and contentment; how must it needs run over at the sight of those worlds of beauty and excellency, which are here met and united! Lo here, the blessed hierarchy of innumerable Angels; there, the glorious company of the Apostles: here, the goodly fellowship of the Patriarchs and Prophets; there,

the noble army of Martyrs: here, the troops of laborious Pastor and Teachers; there, the numberless multitudes of holy and con scionable Professors. Lord, what exquisite order is here; what perfection of glory!

And if, even in thine eyes, thy poor despised Church upon earth be so beautiful and amiable, *fair as the moon, clear as the sun*; Cant. vi. 10: which yet, in the eyes of flesh, seems but homely and hard favoured: how infinite graces and perfections shall our spiritual eyes see, in thy glorified spouse above! what pure sanctity! what sincere charity! what clear knowledge! what absolute joy! what entire union! what wonderful majesty! what complete felicity! All shine alike in their essential glory, but not without difference of degrees. All are adorned with crowns; some also, with coronets: some glister with a sky-like, others with a star-like, clearness: the least hath so much, as to make him so happy, that he would not wish to have more; the greatest hath so much, that he cannot receive more.

O divine distribution of bounty, where is no possibility of either want or envy! O transcendent royalty of the Saints! One heaven is more than a thousand kingdoms; and every Saint hath right to all: so as every subject is here a sovereign; and every sovereign is absolute, under the free homage of an Infinite Creator. Lo here, crowns, without cares; sceptres, without burden; rule, without trouble; reigning, without change. Oh, the transitory vanity of all earthly greatness! Gold is the most during metal; yet even that yields to age: Solomon's rich diadem of the pure gold of Ophir, is long since dust: these crowns of glory are immarescible, incorruptible; beyond all the compass of time; without all possibility of alteration. Oh, the pressing and unsatisfying contentments of earth! How many poor great ones below have that, which they call honour and riches, and enjoy them not; and, if they have enjoyed them, complain of satiety and worthlessness! Lo here, a free scope of perfect joy, of constant blessedness, without mixture, without intermission: each one feels his own joy; feels each other's; all rejoice in God, *with a joy unspeakable and full of glory*; and most sweetly bathe themselves, in a pure and complete blissfulness. This very sight of blessed souls is happiness; but oh, for the fruition!

Go now, my soul, and, after this prospect, doat upon those silly profits and pleasures, which have formerly bewitched thee; and, if thou canst, forbear to long after the possession of this blessed immortality; and repine at the message of this so advantageous a translation; and pity and lament the remove of those dear pieces of thyself, which have gone before thee to this unspeakable felicity.

SECT. VI.

WHEREIN THE GLORY OF THE SAINTS ABOVE CONSISTETH, AND HOW THEY ARE EMPLOYED.

SUCH is the Place, such is the Condition, of the Blessed. What is their Employment? How do they spend, not their time, but their eternity?

How? but in the exercise of the perpetual acts of their blessedness; Vision, Adhesion, Fruition?

Who knows not, that there is a contract passed betwixt God and the regenerate soul, here below? Out of the engagement of his mercy and love, he endows her with the precious graces of faith, of hope, of charity: faith, whereby she knowingly apprehends her interest in him: hope, whereby she cheerfully expects the full accomplishment of his gracious promises: charity, whereby she is feelingly and comfortably possessed of him, and clings close unto him. In the instant of our dissolution, we enter into the consummation of this blessed marriage. Wherein it pleaseth our bountiful God, to endow his glorified Spouse with these three privileges and improvements of her beatitude, answerable to these three divine graces: Vision answers to faith; for, what our faith sees and apprehends here on earth and afar off as travellers, our estate of glorification exhibits to us clearly and at hand as comprehensors; the object is the same, the degrees of manifestation differ: Adhesion answers to our hope; for, what our hope comfortably expected and longed for, we do now lay hold on as present, and are brought home to it indissolubly: Fruition, lastly, answers to charity; for, what is fruition, but a taking pleasure in the thing possessed, as truly delectable, and as our own; and what is this, but the perfection of love? Shortly, what is the end of our faith, but Sight? what the end of our hope, but Possession? what the end of our love, but Enjoying?

Lo, then, the inseparable and perpetual sight, possession, enjoyment, of the infinitely amiable and glorious Deity, is not more the employment than the felicity of Saints.

And what can the soul conceive matchable to this happiness?

The man after God's own heart had one boon to ask of his Maker: it must be, sure, some great suit, wherein a favourite will set up his rest: *One thing have I desired of the Lord, which I will require: even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord, all the days of my life; to behold the fair beauty of the Lord, and to visit his holy temple;* Psalm xxvii. 4. Was it so contenting a happiness to thee, O David, to behold, for a moment of time, the fair beauty of the Lord in his earthen temple, where he meant not to reveal the height of his glory? How blessed art thou now, when thy soul lives for ever in the continual prospect of the Infinite Beauty and Majesty of God, in the most glorious and eternal sanctuary of heaven! It was but in a cloud and smoke, wherein God shewed himself in his material house; above, thou seest him clothed in a heavenly and incomprehensible light: and, if a little glimpse of celestial glory, in a momentary transfiguration, so transported the prime Apostle, that he wished to dwell still in Tabor; how shall we be ravished with the full view of that all-glorious Deity, whose very sight gives blessedness! What a life doth the presence of the sun put into all creatures here below! yet the body of it is afar off; the power of it, created and finite. Oh, then, how perfect and happy a life must we needs receive from the Maker of it, when the beams of his

heavenly glory shall shine in our face! Here below, our weak senses are marred with too excellent objects: our pure spirits above cannot complain of excess; but, by how much more of that divine light they take in, are so much the more blessed. There is no other thing, wherein our sight can make us happy: we may see all other objects, and yet be miserable: here, our eyes convey into us influences of bliss.

Yet not our eyes alone; but, as the soul hath other spiritual senses also, they are wholly possessed of God: our adhesion is, as it were, a heavenly touch, our fruition, as a heavenly taste, of the Ever Blessed Deity; so the glorified soul in seeing God, feelingly apprehends him as its own; in apprehending, sweetly enjoys him to all eternity, finding in him more absolute contentment than it can be capable of, and finding itself capable of so much as to make it everlastingly happy. Away with those brutish paradises of Jews, and Turks, and some Judaizing Chiliasts, who have placed happiness in the full feed of their sensual appetite; inverting the words of the Epicurean in the Gospel: he could say, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die;* they, "Let us die, for we shall eat and drink:" men, whose belly is their God; their kitchen, their heaven. The soul, that hath had the least smack, how sweet the Lord is, in the weak apprehension of grace here below, easily contemns these dunghill-felicities; and cannot but long after those true and satisfying delights above, in comparison whereof all the pleasures of the paunch and palate, are but either savourless or noisome.

Feast thou thyself, onwards, O my soul, with the joyful hope of this blessed Vision, Adhesion, Fruition. Alas, here, thy dim eyes see thy God through clouds and vapours, and not without manifold diversions: here, thou cleavest imperfectly to that absolute goodness, but with many frail interceptions; every prevalent temptation looseth thy hold, and makes thy God and thee strangers: here, thou enjoyest him sometimes in his favours, seldom in himself; and, when thou dost so, how easily art thou robbed of him, by the interpositions of a crafty and betwitching world! There, thou shalt so see him, as that thou shalt never look off; so adhere to him, as never to be severed; so enjoy him, that he shall ever be All in All to thee, even the soul of thy soul: thy happiness is then essential; thy joy as inseparable as thy being.

SECT. VII.

IN WHAT TERMS THE DEPARTED SAINTS STAND TO US, AND WHAT RESPECTS THEY BEAR TO US.

SUCH is the Felicity, wherein the separate souls of God's elect ones are feoffed, for ever. But, in the mean time, what Terms do they stand in to their once-partners, these human bodies? to these, the forlorn companions of their pilgrimage and warfare? Do they despise these houses of clay, wherein they once dwelt? Or have they, with Pharaoh's courtier, forgotten their fellow-prisoner? Far be it

from us, to entertain so injurious thoughts of those spirits, whose charity is no less exalted than their knowledge.

Some graces they do necessarily leave behind them. There is no room for faith, where there is present vision; no room for hope, where there is full fruition; no room for patience, where is no possibility of suffering: but charity can never be out of date; charity, both to God and man.

As the head and body mystical are undivided, so is our love to both: we cannot love the head, and not the body: we cannot love some limbs of the body, and not others. The triumphant part of the Church then, which is above, doth not more truly love each other glorified, than they love the warfaring part beneath.

Neither can their love be idle and fruitless: they cannot but wish well, therefore, to those they love.

That the glorified Saints then above, in a generality wish for the good estate and happy consummation of their conflicting brethren here on earth, is a truth, not more void of scruple, than full of comfort.

It was not so much revenge, which the souls under the altar pray for upon their murderers; (Rev. vi. 10.) as the accomplishment of that happy resurrection, in which that revenge shall be perfectly acted. The prayer in Zechariah (and Saints are herein parallel) is, *O Lord of Hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation?* Zech. i. 12.

We do not use to joy, but in that, which we wish for. There is joy in heaven, in the presence of the angels for sinners repenting; Luke xv. 7, 10: in the presence of the angels, therefore, on the part of the saints: none but they dwell together.

O ye blessed Saints, we praise God for you, for your happy departure, for your crown of immortality. Ye do, in common, sue to God for us, as your poor fellow-members, for our happy eluctation out of those miseries and temptations, wherewith we are continually conflicted here below, and for our society with you in your blessedness. Other terms of communion, we know none. As for any local presence, or particular correspondence, that ye may have with any of us, as we cannot come to know it; so, if we could, we should have no reason to disclaim it.

Johannes à Jesu-Maria *, a modern Carmelite, writing the life of Theresia, Sainted lately by Gregory the fifteenth, tells us, that as she was a vigilant overseer of her votaries in her life; so, in and after death, she would not be drawn away from her care and attendance: "For," saith he, "if any of her Sisters did but talk in the set hours of their silence, she was wont, by three knocks at the door of the cell, to put them in mind of their enjoined taciturnity:" and, on a time, appearing, as she did often, in a lightsome brightness, to a certain Carmelite, is said thus to bespeak him; "We

* Joh. à Jesu Mar. l. v. de vit. Theres. c. 3.

citizens of heaven, and ye exiled pilgrims on earth, ought to be linked in a league of love and purity *, &c.". Methinks the reporter should fear this to be too much good fellowship for a Saint. I am sure neither divine nor ancient story had wont to afford such familiarity: and many have mis-doubted the agency of worse, where have appeared less causes of suspicion. That this was, if any thing, an ill spirit, under that face, I am justly confident: neither can any man doubt, that, looking further into the relation, finds him to come with a lie in his mouth. For thus he goes on, † "We celestial ones behold the Deity, ye banished ones worship the eucharist; which ye ought to worship with the same affection, wherewith we adore the Deity." Such perfume doth this holy devil leave behind him. The like might be instanced, in a thousand apparitions of this kind; all worthy of the same entertainment.

As for the state of the souls of Lazarus, of the Widow's son, of Jairus's daughter, and of Tabitha, whether there were, by divine appointment, a suspension of their final condition for a time; their souls awaiting not far off from their bodies, for a further disposition: or, whether they were, for the manifestation of the miraculous power of the Son of God, called off from their settled rest, some great divines may dispute; none can determine. Where God is silent, let us be willingly ignorant.

With more safety and assurance may we enquire into those respects, wherein the separated soul stands to that body; which it left behind it, for a prey to the worms, a captive to death and corruption: for, certainly, though the parts be severed, the relations cannot be so: God made it intrinsically natural to that spiritual part, to be the form of man; and, therefore, to animate the body. It was, in the very infusion of it, created; and, in the creating, infused into this co-essential receptacle: wherein it holds itself so interested, as that it knows there can be no full consummation of its glory, without the other half. It was not therefore more loth to leave this old partner in the dissolution, than it is now desirous to meet him again; as well knowing, in how much happier condition they shall meet, than they formerly parted. Before, this drossy piece was cumbersome, and hindered the free operations of this active spirit: now, that by a blessed glorification it is spiritualized, it is every way become pliable to his renewed partner, the soul; and both of them to their infinitely glorious Creator.

SECT. VIII.

THE RE-UNION OF THE BODY TO THE SOUL, BOTH GLORIFIED.

LO, then, so happy a Reunion, as this material world is not capable of, till the last fire have refined it, of a blessed soul, met with a glorified body, for the peopling of the new heaven.

* *Nos cœlestes, ac vos exules, amore ac puritate fœderati esse debemus, &c.*
† *Nos cœlites intuentes Divinitatem, vos exules eucharistiam venerantes; quam eo affectu quo nos Divinitatem suspicimus, colere debetis.* Ibid.

Who can but rejoice in spirit, to foresee such a glorious communion of perfected Saints? to see their bodies, with a clear brightness, without all earthly opacity; with agility, without all dulness; with subtlety, without grossness; with impassibility, without the reach of annoyance or corruption?

There, and then, shalt thou, O my soul, looking through clarified eyes, see, and rejoice to see, that glorious body of thy dear God and Saviour, which he assumed here below; and wherein he wrought out the great work of thy Redemption. There, shalt thou see the radiant bodies of all those eminent Saints, whose graces thou hadst wont to wonder at, and weakly wish to imitate. There, shall I meet with the visible partners of the same unspeakable glory; my once dear partners, children, friends: and, if there can be room for any more joy in the soul that is taken up with God, shall both communicate and appropriate our mutual joys. There shall we, indissolubly, with all the choir of heaven pass our eviternity of bliss, in lauding and praising the incomprehensibly-glorious Majesty of our Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier; in perpetual Hallelujahs to him that sits upon the throne.

And canst thou, O my soul, in the expectation of this happiness, be unwilling to take leave of this flesh for a minute of separation? How well art thou contented to give way to this body, to shut up the windows of thy senses, and to retire itself after the toil of the day, to a nightly rest, whence yet thou knowest it is not sure to rise; or, if it do, yet it shall rise but such as it lay down, some little fresher, no whit better: and art thou so loth to bid a cheerful good-night to this piece of myself, which shall more surely rise than lie down; and not more surely rise, than rise glorious? Away with this weak and wretched infidelity: without which the hope of my change would be my present happiness, and the issue of it mine eternal glory. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

THE

INVISIBLE WORLD.

THE THIRD BOOK:—OF THE EVIL ANGELS.

SECT. I.

OF THEIR FIRST SIN AND FALL.

HITHERTO our thoughts have walked through the lightsome and glorious regions of the spiritual world. Now it is no less requisite, to cast some glances towards those dreadful and darksome parts of it; where nothing dwells but horror and torment. Of the former, it concerns us to take notice for our comfort; of these latter, for terror, caution, resistance.

I read it reported by an ancient traveller, Haytonus, of the order of the Premonstratenses; and cousin, as he saith, to the then King of Armenia; that he saw a country in the kingdom of Georgia, which he would not have believed except his eyes had seen it, called Hamsen, of three days' journey about; covered over with palpable darkness; wherein some desolate people dwell: for those, which inhabit upon the borders of it, might hear the neighing of horses, and crowing of cocks, and howling of dogs, and other noises; but no man could go into them, without loss of himself.*

Surely, this may seem some slight representation of the condition of Apostate Angels, and Reprobate Souls. Their region is the kingdom of darkness: they have only light enough, to see themselves eternally miserable; neither are capable of the least glimpse of comfort or mitigation. But, as it falls out with those, which in a dark night bear their own light, that they are easily discerned by an enemy that waits for them, and good aim may be taken at them, even while that enemy lurks unseen of them; so it is with us, in these spiritual ambushes of the infernal powers: their darkness, and our light, gives them no small advantage against us. The same power, that clears and strengthens the eyes of our soul to see those over-excelling glories of the good angels, can also enable us to pierce through that hellish obscurity; and to descry so much of the natures and condition of those evil spirits, as may render us both wary and thankful.

* Fr. Haytonus in Passagio Terræ Sanctæ. An. 1300. editus à Nicol. Salcone.

In their first creation, there were no angels, but of light. That any of them should bring evil with him from the moment of his first being, is the exploded heresy of a Manes; a man, fit for his name; and, if Prateolus may be believed, of the Trinitarians: yea, blasphemy, rather; casting mire in the face of the most pure and holy Deity. For, from an absolute goodness, what can proceed but good? And, if any then of those spirits could have been originally evil, whence could he pretend to fetch it? Either there must be a predominant principle of evil, or a derivation of it from the fountain of infinite goodness; either of which were very monsters of impiety. All were once glorious spirits: sin changed their hue, and made many of them ugly devils.

Now, straight I am apt to think, "Lord, how should sin come into the world? how into angels? God made all things good: sin could be no work of his. How should the good, that he made, produce the evil, which he hates?" Even this curiosity must receive an answer.

The great God, when he would make his noblest creature, found it fit to produce him in the nearest likeness to himself; and therefore to endue him with perfection of understanding and freedom of will: either of which being wanting, there could have been no excellency in that, which was intended for the best. Such, therefore, did he make his angels. Their will, being made free, had power of their own inclinations: those free inclinations of some of them swayed them awry from that highest end, which they should have solely aimed at; to a faulty respect, unto oblique ends of their own.

Hence was the beginning of sin: for, as it falls out in causes efficient, that when the secondary agent swerves from the order and direction of the principal, straightways a fault thereupon ensues; as when the leg, by reason of crookedness, fails of the performance of that motion, which the appetitive power enjoined, a halting immediately follows: so it is in final causes also, as Aquinas acutely: when the secondary end is not kept in, under the order of the principal and highest end, there grows a sin of the will, whose object is ever good; but, if a supposed and self-respective good be suffered to take the wall of the best and absolute good, the will instantly proves vicious. As, therefore, there can be no possible fault incident into the will of him, who propounds to himself as his only good, the utmost end of all things, which is God himself; so, in whatsoever willer, whose own particular good is contained under the order of another higher good, there may, without God's special confirmation, happen a sin in the will. Thus it was with these Revolting Angels: they did not order their own particular, supposed, good, to the supreme and utmost end; but suffered their will to dwell in an end of their own: and, by this means, did put themselves into the place of God; not regulating their wills by another superior, but making their will the rule of their own desires; which was, in effect, to affect an equality with the Highest. Not that their ambition went so high, as to aspire to a height of goodness or greatness, equal to their Infinite Crea-

tor: this, as the great Leader of the School hath determined it, could not fall into any intelligent nature, since it were no other, than to affect his own not-being; forasmuch as there can be no being at all, without a distinction of degrees, and subordination of beings.

This was, I suppose, the threshold of leaving their first estate. Now it was with angelical spirits, as it is with heavy bodies: when they began to fall, they went down at once; speedily passing through many degrees of wickedness. Let learned Gerson see upon what grounds he conceives, that, in the beginning, their sin might be venial; afterwards, arising to the height of maliciousness: whom Salmeron seconds by seven reasons, alledged to that purpose; labouring to prove, that, before their precipitation, they had large time and place of repentance. The point is too high for any human determination: this we know too well by ourselves, that even the will of man, when it is once let loose to sin, finds no stay; how much more of those active spirits, which, by reason of their simple and spiritual nature, convert themselves wholly to what they do incline!

What were the particular grounds of their defection and ruin? what was their first sin? it is neither needful, nor possible to know. I see the wrecks of this curiosity in some of the ancients; who, misguiding themselves by a false compass of misapplied texts, have split upon those shelves, which their miscarriage shall teach me to avoid. If they have made Lucifer, (that is, the morning star) a Devil; and mistake the King of Babylon (Isaiah xiv. 12.) for the Prince of Darkness, as they have palpably done; I dare not follow them. Rather let me spend my thoughts, in wondering at the dreadful justice, and the incomprehensible mercy, of our Great and Holy God; who, having cast these Apostate Angels into hell, and *reserved them in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the Judgment of the Great Day*, hath yet graciously found out a way to redeem miserable mankind from that horrible pit of destruction. It is not for me, to busy myself in finding out reasons of difference, for the aggravation of the sin of angels, and abatement of man's; as, that sin began in them, they were their own tempters; that they sinned irreparably, since their fall was to them as death is to us: however it were, Cursed be the man, who shall say, that the sin of any creature exceeds the power of thy mercy, O God, which is no other than thyself, infinite. While, therefore, I lay one hand upon my mouth, I lift up the other in a silent wonder, with the Blessed Apostle, and say, *How unsearchable are thy judgments, and thy ways past finding out!* Rom. xi. 33.

SECT. II.

OF THE NUMBER OF APOSTATE SPIRITS.

Who can but tremble, to think of the dreadful precipice of these damned angels; which, from the highest pitch of heaven, were suddenly thrown down into the dungeon of the nethermost hell?

Who can but tremble, to think of their Number, Power, Malice, Cunning, and deadly Machinations?

Had this defection been single, yet it had been fearful: should but one star fall down from heaven, with what horror do we think of the wreck, that would ensue to the whole world! how much more, when the Great Dragon draws down the third part of the stars with his tail! And, lo, these angels were as so many spiritual stars in the firmament of glory. It was here, as in the rebellion of great peers, the common sort are apt to take part in any insurrection.

There are orders and degrees, even in the region of confusion: we have learned of our Saviour to know there is a devil and his angels; and Jewish tradition hath told us of a Prince of Devils.

It was in all likelihood, some prime angel of heaven, that first started aside from his station, and led the ring of this highest and first revolt: millions sided with him, and had their part both in his sin and punishment.

Now, how formidable is the Number of these evil and hostile spirits! Had we the eyes of that holy hermit, for such the first were, we might see the air full of these malignant spirits, laying snares for miserable mankind. And, if the possessors of one poor demoniac could style themselves Legion; a name, that, in the truest account, contains no less than ten cohorts, and every cohort fifty companies, and every company twenty-five soldiers, to the number of one thousand two hundred and twenty-five: what an army of these hellish fiends do we suppose is that, wherewith whole mankind is beleaguered, all the world over! Certainly, no man living, as Tertullian and Nissen have too truly observed, can, from the very hour of his nativity to the last minute of his dissolution, be free from one of these spiritual assailants; if not many, at once. The ejected spirit returns to his former assault, with seven worse than himself.

Even where there is equality of power, inequality of number must needs be a great advantage: a Hercules himself is no match for two antagonists. Yea, were their strength much less than ours, if we be but as a flock of goats feeding upon the hills, when the evil spirits, as the Midianites and Amalekites were against Israel, are like grasshoppers in the valley; what hope, what possibility were there, if we were left in our own hands, for safety or prevalence?

But now, alas, their number is great; but their power is more. Even these evil angels are styled, by him, that knew them, no less than *Principalities* and *Powers*, and *Rulers of the Darkness of this World*, and *Spiritual Wickednesses in heavenly places*. They lost not their strength, when they left their station. It is the rule of Dionysius, too true I fear, That in the Reprobate Angels their natural abilities still hold*. No other than desperate, therefore, were the condition of whole mankind, if we were turned loose into the lists, to grapple with these mighty spirits.

* *Naturalia in Damnatis Angelis manent splendidissima.*

Courage, O my soul; and, together with it, victory. Let thine eyes be but open, as Gehazi's, and thou shalt see more with us than against us. One good angel is able to chase whole troops of these malignant: for, though their natural powers, in regard of the substance of them, be still retained; yet, in regard of the exercise and execution of them they are abated, and restrained by the overruling order of divine justice and mercy; from which, far be that infinite incongruity, that evil should prevail above good*. The same God, therefore, who so disposeth the issue of these human contentions, that *the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong*, cowardiseth and daunteth these mighty and insolent spirits; so as they cannot stand before one of these glorious angels; nor prevail any further, than his most wise providence hath contrived to permit, for his own most holy purposes.

However yet we be, upon these grounds, safe in the good hands of the Almighty; and of those his blessed guardians, to whom he hath committed our charge: yet, it well befits us, to take notice of those powerful executions of the evil angels, which it pleaseth the great Arbiter of the World to give way unto; that we may know what cause we have, both of vigilance and gratitude.

SECT. III.

OF THE POWER OF DEVILS.

No dwarf will offer to wrestle with a giant. It is an argument of no small Power, as well as boldness of that proud spirit, that he durst strive with Michael the archangel: and though he were then foiled in the conflict, yet he ceaseth not still to oppose his hierarchy to the celestial; and, not there prevailing, he pours out his tyranny, where he is suffered, on this inferior world: one while, fetching down fire from heaven, which the messenger called *the fire of God*, upon the flocks and shepherds of Job, Job i. 16; another while, blustering to the air, with hurrying winds and furious tempests, breaking down the strongest towers and turning up the stoutest oaks, tearing asunder the hardest rocks and rending of the tops of the firmest mountains: one while, swelling up the raging sea to sudden inundations; another while, causing the earth to totter and tremble under our feet.

Would we descend to the particular demonstrations of the powerful operations of evil spirits, this discourse would have no end.

If we do but cast our eyes upon Jannes and Jambres, the Egyptian Sorcerers, (in whom we have formerly instanced in another treatise, to this purpose) we shall see enough to wonder at. How close did they, for a time, follow Moses at the heels; imitating those miraculous works, which God had appointed and enabled him to do for Pharaoh's conviction! Had not the faith of that worthy servant of God been invincible, how blank must he

* The original has "God:" but I suspect it is an error of the press for "good." EDITOR.

needs have looked, to see his great works patterned by those presumptuous rivals! Doth Moses turn his rod into a serpent? every of their rods crawleth, hisseth, as well as his. Doth he smite the waters into blood? their waters are instantly as bloody as his. Doth he fetch frogs out of Nilus into Pharaoh's bed-chamber and bosom, and into the ovens and kneading-troughs of his people? they can store Egypt with loathsome cattle, as well as he.

All this while, Pharaoh knows no difference of a god; and hardly yields, whether Jannes or Moses be the better man; although he might easily have decided it, out of the very acts done: he saw Moses his serpent devoured theirs; so as now there was neither serpent nor rod; and, while they would be turning their rod into a serpent, both rod and serpent were lost in the serpent, which returned into a rod: he saw that those sorcerers, who had brought the frogs, could not remove them; and, soon after, sees those jugglers, who pretended to make serpents, blood, frogs, cannot, when God pleaseth to restrain them, make so much as a louse.

But, supposing the sufferance of the Almighty, who knows what limits to prescribe to these infernal powers? They can beguile the senses, mock the phantasy, work strongly by philtres upon the affections, assume the shapes of man or beast, inflict grievous torment on the body, convey strange things insensibly into it, transport it from place to place in quick motions, cause no less sudden disparitions of it, heal diseases by charms and spells, frame hideous apparitions, and, in short, by applying active powers to passive subjects, they can produce wonderful effects; each of all which were easy to be instanced in whole volumes, if it were needful, out of history and experience.

Who then, O God, who is able to stand before these sons of Anak? what are we, in such hands? O match desperately unequal, of weakness with power, flesh with spirit, man with devils!

Away with this cowardly diffidence. Cheer up thyself, O my soul, against these heartless fears; and know, the advantage is on thy side. Could Samson have been firmly bound hand and foot by the Philistine cords, so as he could not have stirred those mighty limbs of his, what boy or girl of Gath or Ascalon would have feared to draw near, and spurn that awed champion? No other is the condition of our dreadful enemies: they are fast bound up with the adamantine chains of God's most merciful and inviolable decree; and forcibly restrained from their desired mischief. Who can be afraid of a muzzled and tied-up mastiff? What woman or child cannot make faces at a fierce lion, or a bloody Bajazet, locked up fast in an iron grate?

Were it not for this strong and strait curb of Divine Providence, what good man could breathe one minute upon earth? The Demoniac in the Gospel could break his iron fetters in pieces, through the help of his legion: those devils, that possessed him, could not break theirs: they are fain to sue for leave to enter into swine; neither had obtained it, in all likelihood, but for a just

punishment to those Gadarene owners. How sure may we then be, that this just hand of Omnipotence will not suffer these evil ones, to tyrannize over his chosen vessels, for their hurt! How safe are we, since their power is limited, our protection infinite!

SECT. IV.

OF THE KNOWLEDGE AND MALICE OF WICKED SPIRITS.

WHO can know how much he is bound to God for safeguard, if he do not apprehend the quality of those enemies, wherewith he is encompassed? whose Knowledge, and Skill, is no whit inferior to their power. They have not the name of Demons * for nothing: their natural knowledge was not forfeited by their fall: the wisdom of the Infinite Giver of it knows how rather, to turn it to the use of his own glory. However, therefore, they are kept off from those divine illuminations, which the good angels receive from God; yet they must needs be granted to have such a measure of knowledge, as cannot but yield them a formidable advantage. For, as spirits, being not stripped of their original knowledge together with their glory, they cannot but know the natures and constitutions of the creatures; and, thereby, their tempers, dispositions, inclinations, conditions, faculties; and, therewith, their wants, their weakness, and obnoxiousness; and, thereupon, strongly conjecture at their very thoughts and intentions, and the likelihood of their repulses or prevailings: out of the knowledge of the causes of things, they can foresee such future events, as have a dependance thereon. To which, if we shall add the improvement, which so many thousand years' experience can yield to active and intelligent spirits, together with the velocity of their motions, and the concurrent intelligence which those powers of darkness hold with each other, we shall see cause enough to disparage our own simplicity, to tremble at our own danger, and to bless God for our indemnity.

But if, unto all these, we shall take notice of their Malice, no whit inferior to their power and knowledge, we cannot but be transported with wonder at our infinite obligations to the Blessed Majesty of Heaven, who preserves us from the rage of so spiteful, cunning, mighty enemies. Satan carries hostility in his very name; and, answerably, in his wicked nature: hostility to the God that made him, as the avenger of his sin; hostility, for his sake, to the creature, which that God made good: his enmity did, as himself, descend from the Highest, for it began at the Almighty; and remains, as implacable, as impotent.

It is a bold and uncouth story, and scarce safe to relate, which I find, in the Book of Conformity, reported, as recited by a demoniac woman, from the mouth of a certain friar, named Jacobus de Pozali, in his Sermon: That St. Macarius once went about to make peace betwixt God and Satan: that it pleased God to say, "If the Devil will acknowledge his fault, I will pardon him:" to which the Evil Spirit returned answer, "I will never acknowledge

* *Ob scientiam nominati*, Aug. l. ix. de Civ. Dei.

any fault of mine; yea, that crucified Saviour should rather cry me mercy for keeping me thus long in hell:" to whom Macarius said, as he well might, "Avoid, Satan." I know not whether more to blame their Saint, if they report him right, for too much charity, or for too little grace and wit, in so presumptuous an endeavour. The very treaty was in him blasphemous; the answer, no other than could be expected from a spirit, obdured in malice, and desperate in that obduredness.

The truth is, he hates us, because he hated God first; and, like the enraged panther, tears the picture, because he cannot reach the person whom it represents.

He, that made him an angel, tells us what he is; since he made himself a devil, even a manslayer from the beginning. His very trade is murder and destruction; and his executions unweariable: *he goes about* continually, *like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*

It is no other, than a marvellous mystery of divine state, too deep for the shallowness of human souls to reach into, that God could, with one word of his powerful command, destroy and dissolve all the powers of hell; yet he knows it best not to do it: only we know he hath a justice to glorify, as well as a mercy; and, that he knows how to fetch more honour to himself, by drawing good out of evil, than by the amotion and prevention of evil. Glory be to that infinite power, justice, mercy, providence, that contrives all things, both in heaven and earth, and hell, to the highest advantage of his own Blessed Name, and to the greatest benefit of his elect.

SECT. V.

THE VARIETY OF THE SPIRITUAL ASSAULTS OF EVIL SPIRITS.

Out of this hellish mixture of Power, Skill, Malice, do proceed all the deadly Machinations of these Infernal Spirits; which have enlarged their kingdom, and furnished the pit of destruction.

It was a great word of the Chosen Vessel, *We are not ignorant of Satan's devices;* 2 Cor. ii. 11. O Blessed Apostle, thy illuminated soul, which saw the height of heaven, might also see the depth of hell: our weak eyes are not able to pierce so low.

That Satan is full of crafty devices, we know too well; but, what those devices are, is beyond our reach. Alas, we know not the secret projects of silly men, like ourselves: yea, who knows the crooked windings of his own heart? much less can we hope to attain unto the understanding of these infernal plots and stratagems: *such knowledge is too wonderful for* us: our clew hath not line enough to fathom these depths of Satan.

But, though we be not able possibly to descry those infinite and hidden particularities of diabolical art and cunning; yet our woeful experience, and observation, hath taught us some general heads of these mischievous practices: divers whereof I am not unwilling to learn and borrow of that great Master of Meditation, Gerson *, the

* Gerson, de Variis Diaboli Tentationibus.

learned Chancellor of Paris, a man singularly acquainted with temptations.

One while, therefore, that Evil One lays before us the incommodities, dangers, wants, difficulties of our callings; to dishearten us, and draw us to impatience and listlessness; and, rather than fail, will make piety a colour of laziness: another while, he spurs up our diligence in our worldly vocation; to withdraw us from holy duties.

One while, he hides his head, and refrains from tempting; that we may think ourselves secure, and slacken our care of defence: another while, he seems to yield; that he may leave us proud of the victory.

One while, he tills us on, to our overhard task of austere mortification; that he may tire our piety, and so stupefy us with a heartless melancholy: another while, he takes us off from any higher exercises of virtue, as superfluous.

One while, he turns and fixes our eyes upon other men's sins; that we may not take view of our own: another while, he amplifies the worth and actions of others, to breed in us either envy or dejection.

One while, he humours our zeal, in all other virtuous proceedings; for but the colour of one secret vice: another while, he lets us loose to all uncontrolled viciousness; so as we be content to make love to some one virtue.

One while, under the pretence of discretion, he discourages us from good, if any way dangerous, enterprizes: another while, he is apt to put us upon bold hazards, with the contempt of fear or wit; that we may be guilty of our own miscarriage.

One while, he works suspicion in love, and suggests mis-constructions of well-meant words or actions; to cause heart-burning between dear friends: another while, under a pretence of favour, he kills the soul with flattery.

One while, he stirs up our charity to the public performance of some beneficial works; only to win us to vain-glory: another while, he moves us, for avoiding the suspicion or censure of singularity, to fashion ourselves to the vicious guises of our sociable neighbours.

One while, he persuades us to rest in the outward act done, as meritoriously acceptable: another while, under a colour of humility, he dissuades us from those good duties, whereby we might be exemplary to others.

One while, he heartens us in evil-gettings; under pretence of the opportunity of liberal alms-giving: another while, he closes our hands, in a rigorous forbearance of needful mercy; under a fair colour of justice.

One while, he incites us, under a pretence of zeal, to violate charity, in unjust censures and violent executions: another while, under pretence of mercy, to bear with gross sins.

One while, he stirs us up, under a colour of charitable caution, to wound our neighbour with a secret detraction: another while,

out of carnal affections, he would make us the panders of others' vices.

One while, he sets on the tongue to an inordinate motion; that many words may let fall some sin: another while, he restrains it in a sullen silence; out of an affectation of a commendable modesty.

One while, out of a pretended honest desire to know some secret and useful truth, he hooks a man into a busy curiosity, and unawares entangles the heart in unclean affections: another while, he brooks many a sin, with only the bashfulness of enquiry.

One while, he injects such pleasing thoughts of fleshly delights, as may at the first seem safe and inoffensive; which, by a delayed entertainment, prove dangerous and inflaming: another while, he overlays the heart with such swarms of obscene suggestions, that, when it should be taken up with holy devotion, it hath work enough to repel and answer those sinful importunities.

One while, he moves us to an ungrounded confidence in God, for a condescent or deliverance; that, upon our disappointment, he may work us to impatience; or, upon our prevailing, to a proud and over-weening opinion of our mistaken faith: another while, he casts into us glances of distrust, where we have sure ground of belief.

One while, he throws many needless scruples into the conscience; for a causeless perplexing of it, affrighting it even from lawful actions: another while, he labours so to widen the conscience, that even gross sins may pass down unfelt.

One while, he will seem friendly in suggesting advice to listen unto good counsel, which yet he more strongly keeps us off from taking; for a further obduration: another while, he moves us to slight all the good advice of others, out of a persuasion of our own self-sufficiency; that we may be sure to fall into evil.

One while, he smooths us up in the good opinion of our own gracious disposition; that we may rest in our measure: another while, he beats us down with a disparagement of our true graces; that we may be heartless and unthankful.

One while, he feeds us with a sweet contentment, in a colourable devotion; that we may not care to work our hearts to a solid piety: another while, he endeavours to freeze up our hearts, with a dulness and sadness of spirit, in our holy services; that they may prove irksome, and we negligent.

One while, he injects lawful, but unseasonable motions of requisite employments; to cast off our minds from due intention in prayers, hearing, meditation: another while, he is content we should over-weary ourselves with holy tasks; that they may grow tediously distasteful.

One while, he woos a man, to glut himself with some pleasurable sin; upon pretence that this satiety may breed a loathing of that whereof he surfeits: another while, he makes this spiritual drunkenness but an occasion of further thirst.

One while, he suggests to a man the duty he owes to the main-

tenance of his honour and reputation, though unto blood: another while, he bids him be tongue-proof; that he may render the party shamelessly desperate in evil doing.

One while, he allows us to pray long; that we may love to hear ourselves speak, and may languish in our devotion: another while, he tells us there is no need of vocal prayers, since God hears our thoughts.

One while, he urgeth us to a busy search and strong conclusion of the unfailable assurance of our election to glory, upon slippery and unsure grounds: another while, to a careless indifferency and stupid neglect of our future estate; that we may perish through security.

One while, slighting the measure of contrition, as unsufficient: another while, working the heart to take up with the least velleity of penitent sorrow, without straining it to any further afflictive degrees of true penance.

One while, suggesting such dangerous points of our self-examination, that the resolution is every way unsafe; so as we must presume upon our strength, if we determine affirmatively; if negatively, decline towards despair: another while, encouraging a man, by the prosperous event of his sin, to re-act it; and, by the hard successes of good actions, to forbear them.

One while, under pretence of giving glory to God for his graces, stirring up the heart to a proud over-valuing our own virtues and abilities: another while, stripping God of the honour of his gifts; by a causeless pusillanimity.

One while, aggravating our unworthiness to be sons, servants, subjects, guests, alms-men of the holy and great God: another while, upon some poor works of piety or charity, raising our conceits to a secret gloriation of our worthiness, both of acceptance and reward, and God's beholdingness to us.

Shortly, for it were easy to exceed in instances, one while, casting undue fears into the tender hearts of weak regenerates, of God's just desertions, and of their own sinful deficiencies: another while, puffing them up, with ungrounded presumptions of present safety and future glory.

These, and a thousand more such arts of deceit, do the evil spirits practise upon the poor soul of wretched man, to betray it to everlasting destruction. And if, at any time, they shall pretend fair respects, it is a true observation of a strict votary, That the Devils of Consolation are worse than the Afflictive. O my soul, what vigilance can be sufficient for thee, while thou art so beset with variety of contrary temptations?

SECT. VI.

OF THE APPARITIONS AND ASSUMED SHAPES OF EVIL SPIRITS.

Besides these mental and ordinary onsets, we find when these malignant spirits have not stuck, for a further advantage, to clothe themselves with the appearances of visible shapes; not of meaner

creatures only, but of men, both living and dead; yea, even of the good angels themselves *.

It were easy to write volumes, of their dreadful and illusive apparitions: others have done it before me: my pen is for other use. The times are not past the ken of our memory, since the frequent, and in some part true, reports of those familiar devils, fairies, and goblins, wherewith many places were commonly haunted: the rarity whereof, in these latter times, is sufficient to descry the difference, betwixt the state of ignorant superstition, and the clear light of the Gospel. I doubt not, but there were many frauds intermixed, both in the acting and relating divers of these occurrences; but he, that shall detract from the truth of all, may as well deny there were men living in those ages before us. Neither can I make question of the authentic records of the examinations † and confessions of witches and sorcerers, in several regions of the world, agreeing in the truth of their horrible pacts with Satan, of their set meetings with evil spirits, their beastly homages and conversations. I should hate to be guilty of so much incredulity, as to charge so many grave judges and credible historians with lies.

Amongst such fastidious choice of whole dry-fats of voluminous relations, I cannot forbear to single out that one famous story ‡ of Magdalen de la Croix, in the year of our Lord Christ, 1545: who, being born at Cordova in Spain, whether for the indigence or devotion of her parents, was, at five years' age, put into a convent of nuns. At that age, an evil spirit presented himself to her, in the form of a blackmoor, foul and hideous: she startled at the sight, not without much horror; but, with fair speeches and promises of all those gay toys wherewith children are wont to be delighted, she was wont to hold society with him; not without strong charges of silence and secrecy: in the mean time, giving proof of a notable quick wit, and more than the ordinary ability incident into her age; so as she was highly esteemed, both of the young novices, and of the aged nuns. No sooner was she come to the age of twelve or thirteen years, than the Devil solicits her to marry with him; and, for her dowry, promises her, that, for the space of thirty years, she shall live in such fame and honour for the opinion of her sanctity, as that she shall be for that time the wonder of all Spain. While this wicked spirit held his unclean conversation with her in her chamber, he delegates another of his hellish complices, to supply the place and form of his Magdalen, in the church, in the cloister, in all their meetings; not without marvellous appearance of gravity and devotion: disclosing unto her also the affairs of the world

* *Diabolus, gloriosâ formâ, diademate gemmeo et aureo redimitus, veste regiâ indutus, apparuit Martin precanti; se Christum dicit: cui, post silentium aliquod, Sanctus: Ego Christum, nisi in illo habitu formâque quâ passus est, nisi crucis stigmata proferentem, venisse non credam: hinc evanuit. Hoc narravit Sulpitio Martinus ipse; ut refert idem* Sever. Sulp. in vitâ Martini.
† Bodin Dæmonomania; ubique. ‡ Sim. Goul. Hist. admirables. Casside Reney en ses Relations. Zuinger. Theatre de vie Human. Bodin. Dæmonomania; l. ii.

abroad; and furnishing her with such advertisements, as made her wondered at; and won her the reputation, not of a holy virgin only, but of a prophetess. Out of which height of estimation, although she was not, for years, capable of that dignity, she was, by the general votes of the sisterhood, chosen unanimously, to be the abbess of that convent. Wonderful were the feats, which she then did: the priest cries out in his celebration, that he missed one of the holy host, which he had consecrated; and, lo, that was, by her wonted angel, invisibly conveyed to holy Magdalen: the wall, that was betwixt her lodging and the quire, at the elevation of the host, clave asunder, that holy Magdalen might see that sacred act: and, which was yet more notorious, on solemn festivals, when the nuns made their procession, Magdalen was, in the sight of the beholders, lift up from the earth, the height of three cubits, as if she should have been rapt up to heaven: and, sometimes, while she bore in her arms a little image of the child Jesus, new born and naked, weeping, like a true Magdalen, abundantly over the babe; her hair seemed, by miracle, suddenly lengthened so low as to reach unto her ankles, for the covering of the naked child; which, so soon as she had laid aside that dear burden, returned suddenly to the wonted length. These, and many other the like miracles, made her so famous, that Popes, Emperors, the Grandees of Spain wrote to her, beseeching her in their letters to recommend their affairs to God in her powerful devotions, and in requiring her advice and advertisements in matters of high importance; as appeared afterwards, by the letters found in her cabinet. And the great ladies of Spain, and other parts, would not wrap their newborn infants in any clouts or swaddling-bands, but such as the sacred hands of abbess Magdalen had first touched and blessed. All the nuns of Spain were proud of so great an honour of their order, and such miraculous proofs of their sanctity. At last, it pleased God to lay open this notable fraud of the Devil: for Magdalen, after thirty years' acquaintance with this paramour, having been abbess now twelve years, began to receive some remorse of her former practices; and, growing to a detestation of her horrible society with that evil spirit, found means freely to discover to the Visitors of her Order, all the whole carriage of this abominable and prodigious wickedness: although some credible, wise, and learned persons have reported, that she, perceiving the nuns to have taken secret notice of her foul pranks, lest she should run into a deserved condemnation, did, under the favour of those laws which give pardon to self-accusing offenders, voluntarily confess her monstrous villainy and impiety. This confession blanked many of her favourers and admirers; and seemed so strange, that it was held fit not to believe it, without strict and legal examinations and proceedings. Magdalen was close imprisoned in her convent; and, being called to question, confessed all this mystery of iniquity. Yet still her Moor continued his illusions: for, while she was fast locked up in her cell, with a strong guard upon her doors; the nuns were no

sooner come into the quire, towards morning, to say their matins, than this deputy-apparition of Magdalen took up her wonted stall, and was seen devoutly tossing her beads amongst her sisters; so as they thought the Visitors had surely freed her of the crimes objected, upon her vehement penitence: but, hearing that Magdalen was still fast caged in her prison, they acquainted the Visitors with what they had seen, the morning before; who, upon full examination, found, that she had never looked out of the doors of her gaol. The process was at last sent up to Rome; whence, since the confession was voluntary, she had her absolution.

A story of great note and use, for many occasions; and too well known to the world, to admit of either denial or doubt, and ratified, as by the known consent of the time, so by the faithful records of Zuingerus, Bodin, Reney, Goulartius. Lord God, what cunning conveyances are here of the foul spirit! what subtle hypocrisy! what powerful illusions! enough to make sanctity itself suspected; enough to shame the pretence of miracles. He can, for an advantage, be a holy Nun, as well as an ugly Moor: he can be as devout at Matins, Sacraments, Processions, as the best: what wonder? when he can, at pleasure counterfeit, an Angel of Light? In that glorious form, did he appear to Simon Stylites of old; to Gertrude of Westphalia, not without the entertainment of her joy and devotion: till Hermanus of Arnsburgh descried the fraud; and taught her to avoid it, by a means no less advantageous to that ill spirit, than her former devotion. Yea, yet higher, to Pachomius, and to Valens the monk, as Palladius reports, he durst appear and call for adoration; and had it, under the form of the Lord of Life, blessed for ever.

How vain is the observation of those authors, who make this the difference, betwixt the apparitions of good angels and evil: That the good make choice of the shapes, either of beautiful persons, or of those creatures which are clean and hurtless; as of the shape of a lamb to Clement, or a hart to Eustace, or a dove to Gummarus: whereas the evil put themselves into the forms of deformed men, or of harmful and filthy beasts; as of a goat to the assembly of witches, of hogs in the churches of Agatha profaned by the Arians; of serpents, dragons, toads, and other loathsome and terrible creatures, to St. Hilary and Anthony, as Athanasius and Jerome, in their suppositious relations, have reported: and that, if at any time he take upon him the shape of a man, yet it is with some notable defect and incongruity of limbs *; as with a right-foot cloven, or with a whole hoof; never entirely human: when we see that the very glory of angels escapes not their counterfeisance. We know how easy it is for the Almighty to ordain some such mark to be set upon the false shapes of evil spirits, for their better discovery: but why should we rather suppose this to be done, in the case of human bodies, than of heavenly angels? why more, in the resem-

* *Est hæc res mirabilis, nunquam visos esse dæmones utroque pede humano ullibi apparuisse.* Forner. de Ang. Ser. ix.

blance of men, than of all other creatures; since their deceit may be no less dangerous, in either?

But as for these visible devils, they are, in these days, very rare; and, where they have appeared, have wont to work more affright, than spiritual prejudice. Evil spirits are commonly most pernicious to the soul, when they are least seen; not caring so much for our terror, as our seduction.

O God, they are crafty; but thou art wisdom itself: they are malicious; but thou art goodness. Let thy goodness and wisdom ever protect and safeguard us: so shall we be, not more wretched and unsafe in ourselves, than we shall be in thee secure and happy.

SECT. VII.

THE VEHEMENCE OF SATAN'S LAST CONFLICTS.

THESE spirits, because such are neither capable of sleep or weariness; as they are therefore ever busy and restless in their assaults, so their last conflicts use to be most vehement: whether it be, for that, now, the soul is passing out of their reach, as we find they did most tear and torture the demoniac, when they saw themselves upon the point of their ejection; or, whether it be, for that the painful agonies of death yield them more hopes of advantage, since the soul, while it is struggling with those last pangs, must needs have her powers distracted in her resistances. Cruelty, where it would prevail, will be sure to lay most load upon the weakest.

Hereupon it is, that holy men have been most careful to arm themselves strongliest, against those last onsets; and to bend all the forces of their souls, upon their safe dissolution. The holy sister of St. Basil, and Melania, whom St. Jerome magnifies for their sanctity, beseech God, with great fervency, that those envious spirits may not hinder them in their last passage: and devout Bernard, to the same purpose, when he drew near his end, sues to his friend for his earnest prayers, that the heel of his life might be kept safe from the Serpent; so as he might not find where to fix his sting.

Hence it is, that, in former times, good souls have been so provident to hearten themselves against the faint pulse of their death-beds, with that *viaticum sacrum*, the strongest spiritual cordial of the Blessed Eucharist: which hath yielded them such vigour of heavenly consolation, that they have boldly defied all the powers of darkness; and, in spite of all those assaults, have laid themselves down in peace.

O God, I know Satan can want no malice nor will to hurt. I should be his, if I looked for favour from him. He must and will do so much of his worst to me, as thou wilt permit. Whether thou wilt be pleased to restrain him, or strengthen me, thy will be done. Oh, lead me not into temptation; and, when thou doest so, shew thyself strong in my weakness: arm me, for my last brunt: stand by me, in my last combat; make me faithful to the death, that thou mayest give me a crown of life.

SECT. VIII.

OF OUR CARRIAGE TOWARD WICKED SPIRITS; AND THE WAYS OF OUR PREVALENCE AGAINST THEM.

We have seen what the carriage of the Evil Spirits is to us: it were fit, we should ask in what terms we must stand towards them.

That we must maintain a perpetual hostility against them, cannot be doubted; and, whatever acts may tend toward the securing of ourselves, and the abating of the kingdom and power of darkness, those must be exercised by us, to the uttermost. Justly, do we scorn to be beholden to that deadly enemy, in receiving courtesies from him. Favours from such hands, are both sins and curses.

He, that can so easily transform himself, will seem to do good. What cures doth he often work! what discoveries of thefts! what remedies of diabolical operations and possessions, by the agency of witches, wizards, magicians! what an ordinary traffic doth he hold of charms, spells, amulets! Ignorance and superstition are willing enough to be befriended by such pernicious helps; whereby that subtle spirit both wins and kills the soul, while he cures the body.

It is not easy for a man, where he receives a benefit to suspect an enmity: but, withal, it is no less than stupidity, when we find a good turn done us, not to enquire whence it came; and, if we find it to proceed from a mischievous intent of further hurt, not to refuse it.

That there have been diseases remedied, wounds healed, blood stanched, thorns plucked out, serpents stupified, winds procured, by charms, is so notorious, that whoso would doubt of it should make himself a wonder of incredulity: now then, by what power do we think these things done?

Natural, it cannot be: for there is no such efficacy in words or characters, being but of mere device and arbitrary imposition, as may produce real effects.

Preternatural then, it must be; and if so, then either divine or diabolical. Of God, it cannot be: where hath he given warrant to any such practice? where any promise to concur with it? nay, how oft hath he testified his prohibitions and detestation of these courses! Needs must it therefore be, by devilish operation; whose agent, witches and sorcerers are; and whose means of working, are these superstitious inventions, which, by a secret compact, receive their force and success from those infernal powers.

Let those then, that have given to Satan their souls, take favours from him for their bodies: let us, that defy the author, abhor the courtesy. Mine enemy offers me a rich garment: I know it is poisoned; else, he would not give it me: shall I take it, because it is rich; or refuse it, because it is infectious? Let me be sick, rather than receive help from such hands: let my goods be lost, rather than my soul hazarded: let me die, rather than owe my life to my Maker's enemy.

SECT. IX.

HOW WE ARE TO PROCEED AGAINST EVIL SPIRITS.

WE may not yield to that Evil One. Our next thought must be, how to oppose him.

Our skilful Leader hath prescribed a spiritual panoply, both for defence and victory: *The helmet of salvation; the breast-plate of righteousness; the girdle of verity; the sword of the Spirit; and above all, the shield of faith, wherewith we may be able* both *to quench* and beat back *the fiery darts of that wicked one.* These, well put on and well managed, shall both secure us, and foil our adversary.

But the art of repelling several temptations, is a long work, and worthy of a just volume. How we ought to deal with evil spirits, in their bodily apparitions and possessions, may be seasonable for our present enquiry.

Whereas, then, there is pretended to be only a double way of proceeding for their ejection; the one by pact, the other by command: as the former is disclaimed, by all faithful Christians; so the other is wont to be challenged and practised, by some, who lay no small claim to holiness.

This we call exorcism or conjuration: a course so well approved of the Churches of the Roman Correspondence, as that they make this office one of the seven stairs, whereby they ascend to their highest order: but so disrelished by us, that we ordinarily place conjurers in the same rank of sorcerers, and professors of the black and damned arts; although, indeed, upon a strict inquisition, we shall find them far different; for conjuration or exorcism implies a kind of force and violence, whereas those, that are in league with Satan, go on as upon a set match in a way cursedly amicable.

This latter is heinously sinful; as being directly against the Divine Law, and a professed affront to the Majesty of God: the former, unjustifiable; as being without divine warrant.

It is most true, that the disciples of Christ and their primitive successors ejected devils, by command; and could rejoice to see those evil spirits subjected to their over-ruling charge: but, withal, the same persons healed all diseases, were perfect poison proof, spake divers languages.

Why should any in these latter times challenge a right of succession in one of these, and not claim it in the other? All these were given, with one and the same breath; continued, by the same power; called in and stinted, by the same providence, with their fellow-miracles.

And, if still this privilege were ordinarily left in the Church, it were not a work for puisnes and novices, but for the greatest masters and most learned and eminently-holy doctors, which the times can possibly yield.

And, if this were really done, as is commonly vaunted by them; yet, with how much difference from the apostolic practice and issue! With them of old, there was no more but a word of command, and

an instant ejection: here, what a world of business! what sprinkling! what censing! what blessings of herbs, and other ingredients of suffumigation! what variety of direful ceremonies! and, when all is done, the success shuts up no otherwise, than in just suspicion or censure.

Not that free scope is given, in these last times, without any check, to the tyranny of evil spirits. The good providence of the Highest hath not left us unfurnished with means of our freedom and deliverance. Whilst we can pray, we cannot be remediless. When the disciples' power stuck at the dispossession of a demoniac, they heard from our Saviour, *This kind goes not out but by fasting and prayer.* Whence it is plain, that, as there are several kinds of devils, one worse and more powerful than another; so the worst of them are to be vanquished by prayer, sharpened with abstinence.

What a difference then there is of times and means! At the first, it was a greater work to dispossess devils, by prayer and fasting, than by command; now, it were far greater to do it, by a mere command, than by prayer and fasting: that, which was then ordinarily done, were now strangely miraculous; and that, which is in the ordinary course now, was then rare and unusual: the power of an adjuring command. we see ceased; the power of fervent prayer, can never be out of date.

This, and this only, is the remedy of both bodily and mental possession: thus, if we will *resist the devil, he shall flee away* from us. Upon the ground of this scripture it was, as myself was witness, that, in our age, Mr. Dayrel, a godly and zealous preacher, undertook, and, accordingly through the blessing of God upon his faithful devotion, performed, those famous ejectments of evil spirits, both at Nottingham and Lancashire, which exercised the press and raised no small envy from the gainsayers.

Shortly, all, that we have to do concerning malignant spirits, is, to repay them with hatred; to persuade our hearts of their continual dogging of us for mischief; to arm ourselves with constant resolutions of resistance; diligently to watch the ways of their temptations; to keep the strongest guard upon our weakest parts; to fortify ourselves, by our faithful prayers; and, by the virtue of our faith, to make him ours, who is able to strengthen us, and to make us more than conquerors.

SECT. X.

OF THE WOEFUL ESTATE OF THE SOULS OF THE DAMNED.

It is not for our discourse, to sever those, whom the divine justice will have put together; Devils, and Damned Souls.

There is none of those evil spirits, which doth not, wheresoever he is, carry his hell about him: yet, doubtless, there are degrees of their torture: *Art thou come to torment us before our time?* said those devils to our Blessed Saviour: and how do they beg not to be commanded to the deep!

Reprobate souls are no less partners of their pain, than objects of

their fury. No sooner is this living spirit of ours dislodged from the body, than it is presented, as in a Privy Sessions, to her Judge; from whom she receives a speedy doom, of life, or death. The sentence is instantly seconded, with an answerable execution. The good angels are glad actors, in the happy instalment of the just, in their glory: the evil angels seize upon the guilty soul, and drag it to their hell. For any third place, or condition; let them take thought, that believe it: for me, I must profess I never saw any colour of ground for it, in the Sacred Oracles of God; and shall not easily believe, that a truth, mainly importing us, would have been concealed from our eyes.

Woe is me, what a doleful, what a dreadful spectacle is this, which is now presented to my soul! the burning Tophet; the bottomless pit; the lake of fire and brimstone; the region of horror and death: wherein there is the perfection of all more-than-conceiveable anguish; the full consummation of the divine vengeance to sinners: exquisiteness, eternity of torment; despair and impossibility of release, or intermission; perpetual dying, perpetual living in a death that never can end. How are my thoughts at a loss in this place of confusion! whether shall I more tremble, O God, at the consideration of thy terrible justice, or be swallowed up with astonishment of these infinite and intolerable sufferings? I should not know thee, if I did not, with holy Chrysostom, believe, that the utter loss of thy presence alone, is as a thousand hells: to be for ever banished from thy sight, in which is the fulness of joy, what can it be less, than fulness of torment? But, alas, this is far from a mere absence.

The very sin of the damned is no small part of their hell: for as all their powers, parts, faculties, are as so many subjects of their insupportable pain and torture; so, out of that insufferable extremity, they conceive a desperate indignation and hatred against God: not, as he is in himself, infinitely good, for goodness can be no object of hate; but, as he is to them, a severe, though most just, avenger of sin: to which is ever added a will obstinately fixed in evil; while they were in their way, they were in a possibility of reclamation; now that they are *in termino*, they can be no other than they are. As, therefore, the glorified souls are in a condition, like to the angels of heaven: so the damned are in the state of devils; not more capable of avoiding torment, than sin; equally *reserved in everlasting chains of darkness, to the judgment of the great day*: when, woe is me! that, which seemed little less than infinite, shall yet receive a further aggravation of pain and misery; when the addition of the body shall give a further extent to this woeful cruciation, without all possibility of release for ever.

Alas, what anguish do I feel in myself, to see the body of a malefactor flaming at a stake! and yet this is but the act of a few minutes: for the air, so vehemently incended, instantly stops the passage of that free breath, which should maintain life; and the flesh, by opposition of that combustible matter which encompasses

it, is soon turned into dead cinders. But, if I could conceive of a body frying a whole day in a continued flame, Lord, how should I be affected with the sad compassion of that intolerable torment, and burn inwardly with the sense of another's pain! but, to think of a whole year's broiling in such a fire, how can it but turn our bowels within us! What then, Oh, what is it, to conceive of lying in a fire more intense than nature can kindle, for hundreds, thousands, millions, yea millions of millions of years; yea, further beyond these, than these are beyond a minute of time to all eternity: where, besides the endurance, every thing, that makes towards the mitigation of other pains, adds to these!

Here is society of tortures; but such, as tortureth more: those perpetual howlings, and shriekings, and wailings of so many millions of the damned, were enough to make the place a hell, even to him, that should be exempted from those sufferings. Here is some glimpse of knowledge of the blessed estate of glorified souls; enough to heighten their envy, enough to perfect their torment: even as meat is set before that man, which is doomed to famish. Shortly, here is exquisite disconsolateness, gloomy darkness, extreme horror, pain insufferable, hideous ejaculations, utter hopelessness, vexing indignation, furious blasphemies, infinite dolour and anguish; without relaxation, without pity, without possibility of remedy, or ease, or end. How can it be otherwise? O God, if thy mercy have prepared such a heaven for thy poor servants, whose very best works, for their great imperfection, deserve nothing but punishment; what a hell hath thy justice provided for those enemies of thine, that wilfully despite thee, and offend of malicious wickedness! How infinitely art thou more just, than sinners can be miserable!

But it is enough, O my soul, to have looked into the pit; enough, to make thee to lament the woeful condition of those, that are there shut up; enough, to warn thee to avoid those sinful ways, that lead down to these chambers of death; enough, to make thee think no tears can be sufficient, to bewail the desperate carelessness of wretched sinners, that run on in a known course of wickedness, without any regard of an ensuing damnation. Alas, so are they bewitched, they have not the grace to pity themselves and to foresee the danger of their own utter perdition; which if they could but look into, they would be ready to run mad with horror. Poor souls, could they but recover their reason, they would then think, "If a thousand days' pleasure cannot weigh with one hour's torment, what do I buy one hour's pleasure with the torment of more than ten thousand ages? How do I dare to dance, for a few minutes, upon the mouth of hell, with the peril of an everlasting burning?" Surely, if infidelity had not robbed men of their wits, they could not resolve to purchase the momentary pleasures of sin, with so dreadful and eternal damnation.

SECT. XI.

A RECAPITULATION OF THE WHOLE DISCOURSE.

AND now, what is to be done? Surely, as some traveller, that hath, with many weary steps, passed through divers kingdoms and countries, being now returned to his quiet home, is wont to solace his leisure, by recalling to his thoughts a short mental landscape of those regions, through which he hath journeyed; here conceiving a large plain, there a lake; here a track of mountains, there a wood; here a fen, there a city; here a sea, there a desert; so do thou, O my soul, upon this voyage of thine through the great Invisible World, bethink thyself of what thou hast seen; and so abridge this large prospect to thyself, as that it may never be out of thine eye.

Think, first, that, whatsoever thou seest, thou canst not look beside the Invisible Majesty of thy God. All this material world is his; he is in all; rather, all is in him; who, so comprehends this universe, that he is infinitely without it. Think of him, as with thee; as in thee; as every where. Do thou, therefore, ever acknowledge him, ever adore him, ever enjoy him, ever be approved of him. See him; from whom, thou canst not be hid: rely on him; without whom, thou canst not subsist: glorify him; without whom, thou canst not be happy.

Next, as those, that have their celestial life and being, by, from, and in him, wonder at the glorious Hierarchy of the heavenly Angels: bless him, in their pure and spiritual nature, in their innumerable numbers, in their mighty power, in their excellent knowledge: bless him, in their comely orders, in their divine offices, in their beneficial employments, in their gracious care and love of mankind. And, so far as weak flesh and blood may with pure and majestical spirits, converse with them daily: entertain them, for thou knowest they are present, with awful observances, with spiritual allocutions: ask of thyself, how pleasing thine actions are to them: receive from them their holy injections; return to them, under thy God, thy thankful acknowledgments: expect from them a gracious tuition here, and a happy transportation to thy glory.

After these, represent to thyself the blessed society of the late charge, and now partners, of those heavenly angels, the Glorified Spirits of the Just. See the certainty of their immortal being, in the state of their separation. See them, in the very instant of their parting, blessed with the vision, with the fruition, of their God. See how they now bathe themselves in that celestial bliss; as being so fully sated with joy and happiness, that they cannot so much as desire more. See them, in a mutual interknowledge, enjoying each others' blessedness. See the happy communion, which they hold with their warfaring brotherhood, here upon earth; whose victory and consummation they do, in a generality, sue for to the Throne of Grace. Foresee them, lastly, after a longing desire of meeting with their old and never forgotten partner, joyfully re-

united to their now-glorified bodies; and employing their eternity of life, in continual Hallelujahs to him, that sits upon the Throne. Take up thy rest here, O my soul, for ever.

But do not, as yet, thus end thy prospect: it is good for thee, to know worse things. If, in paradise, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil were forbidden to our first parents, the act of the knowledge of both is not forbidden to us: even to know evil in speculation, may avoid the knowledge of it in a woeful experience. See, then, O my soul, the best creature falleth from good into evil. In choosing it, see him, by mis-inclining his own will, apostatizing from his Infinite Creator; and hurled down headlong, from the height of heavenly glory, to the bottom of the nethermost hell.

See the irrecoverable condition and dreadful numbers of those Precipitated Angels: see their formidable power; their implacable malice; their marvellous knowledge, craft, skill to do mischief; their perpetual machinations of our destruction, especially in their last assaults: see their counterfeisance, in their glorious and seemingly-holy apparitions, for a spiritual advantage.

And, when thou hast recollected thyself to a resolution of defiance and unweariable resistance, cast thine eye upon the deplorable condition of those Damned Souls, whom they have either betrayed by their fraud, or by their violence mastered; and, whilst thou dost bless and magnify the divine justice in their deserved torment, spend thy tears upon those, who would needs spend their eternity of being, in weeping, wailing, and gnashing: and, lastly, rouze up thyself, in the moment of thy remaining life, unto all careful and fervent endeavours, to save thyself, and to rescue others from this fearful damnation.

SECT. XII.

THE COMPARISON OF BOTH WORLDS: AND HOW OUR THOUGHTS AND AFFECTIONS SHOULD BE TAKEN UP WITH THE INVISIBLE WORLD.

Now, then, having taken a view of both worlds; of the material world, by the eyes of sense and reason; of the invisible, by the eyes of reason and faith; I cannot but admire God in both, and both of them in God; but the invisible so much more, as it is infinitely beyond the other: for, God himself is the world of this world; whom, while in the material world we admire in his creatures, in this immaterial we admire in himself. Now himself must needs be infinitely more wonderful, than many worlds, if such there were, of those creations, that should proceed from him.

As for the parts of the created, but Invisible World, it must needs be said, the lightsome part of it hath more glory, than any piece of the material world can be capable of: on the contrary, the dark and privative region of the Invisible World, hath infinitely more horror than the other. For, what is the worst and most disconsolate darkness of this visible world, but a privation of the light of the sun; which yet can never be so absolute as to exclude all im-

perfect diffusion of those insensible glimmerings; whereas the darkness of this spiritual world is an utter privation of the sight of God, joined with an unconceivable anguish. Even in nature, spiritual essences must needs be more excellent than bodily; and of only spirits it is, that the Invisible World consisteth. Besides, what vanity and inconstancy do we find every where, in this material and elementary world! what creature is there, which doth not exchange life, for death; being, for dissolution; sanity, for corruption? What uproars do we find in the air! what commotions and turbulencies upon earth! The best state of things is an uncertain vicissitude; the worst, certain desolation and destruction: whereas, the Invisible World is settled in a firm and steady immutability; the blessed angels and souls of the saints being so fixed in their glory, that they are now no more capable of alteration. Shortly, he, that saw both worlds, shuts up all in one word: *The things, that are seen, are temporal; the things, that are not seen, eternal;* 2 Cor. iv. 18.

As, then, I can never open my bodily eyes, but I shall see the material world; and I hope I shall never see it, but I shall praise the power, and wisdom, and goodness of the Infinite Creator of it: so shall it be one of the main cares of my life, to bless the eyes of my soul, with the perpetual view of the Spiritual and Invisible World. Every action, every occurrent shall mind me of those hidden and better things: and I shall so admit of all material objects, as if they were altogether transparent; that through them I might see wonderful prospects of another world. And, certainly, if we shall be able so to withdraw ourselves from our senses, that we shall see, not what we see, but what we think, as it uses to be in the strong intentions of the mind; and shall make earthly things, not as lunets to shut up our sight, but spectacles to transmit it to spiritual objects; we shall lead a life as far removed from those beasts which we see, as near approaching to those angels whom we converse with and see not.

Neither shall it be enough for us to know an Invisible World, and to consider that all we see is the least part of what we see not; unless we be so affected to the unseen world, as we ought. It is not knowledge, that must shew us how to be Christians; but it is our affection, that must make us so.

In the acknowledgment therefore, of an invisible Glory and Infiniteness, our hearts must be ever taken up with a continual awe and reverence. If some great prince shall vouchsafe to let me be seen of him, although he please to keep himself unseen of me; and shall only, according to the state of some great eastern monarchs, speak to me behind a vail or traverse; or, as the great Prete of the South had wont to grace ambassadors, shew me only some part of his leg *, so as that I may understand him to be present; I should think it concerned me, to carry myself in no less seemly fashion to-

* Jo. Leo Afric. descr. Afr.

wards him, than if I saw his face: for his sight of me, calls for a due regard from me; not my sight of him.

Since, therefore, we have so certain demonstrations of the undoubted presence of God and his holy angels ever with us, though not discernible by our bodily eyes, with what fear and trembling, with what reverence and devotion, should we always stand or walk before them! making it our main care to be approved of them, to whom we lie no less open than they are hid to us.

As for the glorified saints of God, who are gone before us to our home; with what spiritual joy should we be ravished at the consideration of their blessed condition! who now have attained to the end of their hopes, glory and bliss without end; ever seeing, ever enjoying him, at whose right-hand are pleasures for evermore: how should we bless God for their blessedness, and long for our own!

Lastly, how should our joy be seasoned with a cautious fear, when we cast our eyes upon those objects of dread and horror, the principalities and powers of darkness: not so confined to their hell, as to leave us untempted, and encreasing their sin and torment by our temptation!

How should our hearts bleed with sorrow and commiseration of those wretched souls, which we see daily entangled in the snares of the Devil; and captivated by him, at his will, here on earth; and frying, under his everlasting torments, in the pit of hell!

How should our hearts be prepossessed with a most earnest and vigilant care, to resist all the dangerous assaults of those wicked spirits, and to prevent the peril of our own like-woeful destruction! If we shall make this use of our being in this visible world, happy are we, that ever we came into it; more happy, in our going out of it: for, having thus used it, as if we used it not, we shall so enjoy the other, as those that ever enjoy it; and, in it, all glory, honour, immortality.

Lo, then, O my soul, the glorious world, which thou art now aspiring unto; yea, whereinto thou art now entering. There, there fix thyself, never to be removed. Look down upon these inferior things, with an overly contempt: forget what is past, as if it had never been. Bid a willing farewell to this visible world; wherein thy Creator hath a just interest of glory, for that the substance of it is the wondrous workmanship of his hands; so Satan, styled the Prince of it, claimeth no small share, in regard of its sinful depravation.

Farewell, then, ye frivolous and windy honours, whose management is ever wont to be in other hands, not in our own: which have ever been no less fickle, than the breath ye have depended upon: whose chief use hath been for temptation, to puff up the heart with a proud conceit of eminence above others; not requiting, in the mean while, the danger, with any solid contentment.

Farewell, ye deceitful riches, which, when we have, we cannot hold; and, even while we hold, we cannot enjoy: and, if we offer and affect to enjoy, is it not with our spiritual loss? for what love we yield to cast away upon you, we abate to him, that is the true

and all-sufficient good. More than for necessary use, we are never the better for you; oftentimes, the worse: your load is more uneasy, than your worth is precious.

Farewell, pleasures, if I ever knew what ye were; which have always wont to afford more sting than honey: whose only scope hath professedly been, under a pretence of delectation, to debauch and emasculate the mind, and to dis-relish all spiritual comforts; where your expectation hath been somewhat delightful, your fruition hath been unsatisfying; your loss, displeasing; your remembrance, irksome.

Farewell, friends, some of whose unsteadiness and unfaithfulness hath helped to add to my load, which the fidelity of others had not power to ease; whose love might be apt to condole my shipwreck, but could not spare me a plank to swim to the shore; shortly, whose common misery may be more ready to receive, than give comfort.

The honour, that now I reach at, is no less than a crown; and that, not fading and corruptible, as all these earthly diadems are; but immarcescibly eternal; a crown of righteousness, a crown of glory.

The riches, that I am now for, are not such that are digged out of the base entrails of the earth, obnoxious to spoil and plunder; but treasures laid up in heaven.

The pleasures, that I now affect, are the fulness of joy at the right-hand of the Almighty for evermore.

The friends, that I ambitiously sue for, are those, that shall receive me into everlasting habitations. Lastly, farewell, vanishing life; and welcome, blessed eternity: even so, Lord Jesu, come quickly.

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